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LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING IN ZIMBABWEAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: NARRATIVES OF SCHOOL HEADS

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Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools: Narratives of school heads

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the discipline Educational Leadership, Management and Policy, School of Education, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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DECLARATION

I, Freedom Chiororo, in the following statement declare that this study titled *Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools: Narratives of school heads* meets the following academic standards:

(i) This thesis is my original work and in no way has been submitted or examined in any other academic institution.

(ii) All work that is not originally mine is acknowledged in the form of both in-text referencing and in the reference list.

(iii) Included are my field texts in the form of words, figures and pictures. Where I used other sources, I have cited them, including page numbers for items such as maps, figures and statistics.

(iv) This thesis highlights in direct quotations and page numbers the exact words used of other people's work, and where I did include other people's work or ideas, I cited and paraphrased to avoid plagiarism through acknowledging the relevant researchers.

(v) I also cited my previous academic work, including the chapter I co-authored with other researchers (Naicker, Blose, Chiororo, Khan, & Naicker, 2017).

(vi) This thesis includes my original work and other researchers' work I read from academic journals, student papers and Internet sources (maps, texts and statistics) and a reference list that matches in-text references proves my compliance with university and academic plagiarism policies.

Researcher: _____ _____

Mr F. Chiororo Date

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This thesis has been submitted with / without our approval.

_____	_____
Professor I. Naicker (Main Supervisor)	Professor G. Pillay (Co-supervisor)
_____	_____
Date	Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the Almighty God, without whom nothing is possible. I also dedicate this study to my late father, Mr G. M. Chiororo, who continues to be a source of inspiration in my life.

I wish he were here to see how I have grown as a man and to share the joys of my academic achievement. I also dedicate this thesis to my son, Freedom II Samuel Chiororo, whom I would wish to inspire when he grows up to become a distinguished man who will also choose his own path in upholding the family name in pursuit of excellence.

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ABSTRACT

School heads (principals) play a major role in ensuring that teaching and learning are the core activities of the school. Some school heads fail to lead teaching and learning effectively resulting in poor academic achievement in their schools. This study presents the storied lives of four successful school heads in Zimbabwe who strengthen the quality of teaching and learning through facilitating leadership for learning practices. The study aims to understand who the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools are, what meanings and understandings they draw on as leaders for learning, and how these meanings and understandings shape their leadership-for-learning practices. Hallinger's Leadership for Learning model and social identity theory frame this interpretive study drawing on narrative inquiry as methodology. Narrative interviews, visual-arts-based methods (artefact and collage inquiry) and a transect walk were used to generate field texts. Data analysis occurred at two levels: narrative analysis, and analysis of narratives. The researcher co-constructed with the four participants their stories in a bid to understand their experiences. A deconstruction of the narratives (analysis of the narratives) found that school heads are identified in multiple ways according to their personal and professional context, emotions, roles and responsibilities, based on their past and present experiences. This includes who they want to become in the future (their "future self"). Their identities are transformative in nature, and are constantly renegotiated through experiences. The school heads' personal and professional meanings and understandings were interrelated, and directly influenced their leadership for learning practices. The study concluded that care as an emotion influences instruction, as reflected in the school heads' personal and professional meanings and understandings. Their socio-cultural contexts, in particular being African foregrounded native values such as *hunhu* and *dare*. Importantly, adopted western values such as Christianity, had great influence on the school heads' identity, personal and professional meanings and understandings of self and their leadership-for-learning practices. Lastly, leadership for learning is seen as a process in which school heads utilise *phronesis* or "practical wisdom" to lead learning, using the 3 R's: Review, Reflect and Re-evaluate.

Key words: Collage inquiry, identity, leadership for learning, narrative inquiry, school heads, transect walk, visual-arts-based methods, Zimbabwe.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACPCA	Anglican Church of the Province of Central Africa
A-Level	Advanced Level
AIK	African Indigenous Knowledge
ELMP	Educational Leadership, Management and Policy
GCE	General Certificate of Education
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LFL	Leadership for Learning
LLM	Leadership for Learning Model
NI	Narrative Interview
O-Level	Ordinary Level
OLZIMSEC	Ordinary Level Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SDA	School Development Association
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SMT	School Management Team
SRC	Student Representative Council
UK	United Kingdom
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISA	University of South Africa
ZCC	Zion Christian Church
ZCHPC	Zimbabwe Centre for High Performance Computing
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council

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CHAPTER 1
AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

School leadership, specifically the influence of the school head, is the second most important factor in successful student learning, after the teaching and learning process itself (Hallinger, 2011). However, most studies on school leadership have focused on theories of successful leadership and management, and little is known about what informs the success of school heads, especially in terms of day to day activities (Kelly, White, Randall, & Rouncefield, 2004). My study explores how school heads in Zimbabwe lead learning. The study seeks to give voice to Zimbabwean school heads from four high-achieving schools in Manicaland Province, in order to make visible their leadership-for-learning (LFL) practices by understanding their lived experiences.

This chapter provides a background to the study, and describes the statement of the problem and the rationale for the study. The research questions that underpin the study are clearly stated, after which a preliminary literature review of the key debates on LFL is presented. Key concepts are then explained to clarify their meanings and how they are used in this study, after which a brief outline of the seven chapters that constitute this thesis concludes the chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The African continent is home to the beautiful country of Zimbabwe, in the southern hemisphere. It shares borders with Mozambique (to the east), South Africa (to the south), Zambia (to the north) and Botswana (to the west). Like most other African countries, Zimbabwe was once colonised. Between 1965 and 1979, while under British rule, the country was known as Rhodesia, until it gained its political independence on the 18th of April 1980, after an armed struggle (Shizha & Kariwo, 2012). Zimbabwe was liberated by the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), the main party led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe, who served as President from 1980 until he was removed in a coup by his long-

standing political ally, Emmerson Mnangagwa, in 2017. Mnangagwa is the current President of Zimbabwe. The country has a population of about 16.5 million people (Plecher, 2018), the majority of whom are black. There are minority groups of white and coloured people. Zimbabwe is known for its successful education system, even though the postcolonial era in Africa has seen most countries fail to maintain the high standards of education introduced by their former colonisers (Jansen, 2017). This has been noted by the prominent South African scholar, Professor Jonathan Jansen (2017), who was inspired as part of his doctoral research at California's Stanford University to understand how Zimbabwe as a country has managed to sustain a strong educational system for so long after independence.

Education is key to the success of any country, as it is fundamental to personal and national development (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015). Like other formerly colonised African countries, Zimbabwe at independence inherited an education system that discriminated according to race, favouring the white minority and providing poor access and facilities for the black majority (Shizha & Kariwo, 2012). Under Robert Mugabe, a former teacher by profession, Zimbabwe as a nation invested heavily in education, and later legislated the constitutional right to education as a basic human right under the Education Act of 1987. Initially, education was administered by the Ministry of Education, Arts, Sports and Culture; however, since 2015 it has been the responsibility of two ministries: the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015).

In Zimbabwe, the education system offers guardians and parents a variety of options in terms of the types of school to which they may send their children. These include government schools, council day schools, and church private boarding schools, although boarding schools are more expensive as they are believed to provide a better education than day schools (Kanyongo, 2005). The education system in Zimbabwe is structured into four phases: pre-school (Grade 0), primary (Grades 1 to 7), secondary (Grades 8 to 12, or the equivalent of Forms 1 to 6) and tertiary (higher education). My study focuses on secondary education, in particular the Ordinary Level (O-Level). Form 1 (Grade 8) marks the entry grade into secondary schooling, which terminates in Form 6 (Grade 12). Secondary education comprises a four-year O-Level cycle, for which the official age of

entry is 13 years, and a two-year Advanced Level (A-Level) cycle (Kanyongo, 2005). The Ordinary Level, according to the British General Certificate of Education (GCE) system, offers the following subjects at secondary school: "English (core), Mathematics (core), Science (core), Art and Design, Citizenship, Design and Technology, Geography, History, Information and Communications Technology, Modern Foreign Language, Music, Physical Education" (Isaacs, 2012, p.5). In Zimbabwe, O-Level subjects include local languages such as Shona and Ndebele.

According to Samkange (2013, p. 635), "Schools in Zimbabwe, regardless of whether they are government or non-government, have the school head as the chief executive officer". In addition, schools remain the basic sites for the provision of education, and any disturbances in the functioning of the school affects the provision of education, as well as the future of the children (Tichagwa, 2012). School heads are therefore critically important in the education system, as they are the ones who manage the schools, lead teaching and learning, and are also answerable to the schools' stakeholders for any problems related to their students' achievement. All Zimbabwean schools — whether they are run by government, cities, councils, communities, churches or independently — fall under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, and are compelled to use credible curricula provided by the Ministry. In Zimbabwe, all public examinations are administered by the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC).

Shizha and Kariwo (2012) note that Zimbabwe as a nation has made remarkable improvements in the provision and quality of teaching and learning post 1980, although the gains have been eroded by economic hardships. Primary schooling has been made free and universal, resulting in increased enrolment figures throughout the country. Secondary education, however, must be funded by parents or guardians (Shizha & Kariwo, 2012), and this has become increasingly difficult for them since Zimbabwe's economic crisis, exacerbated by heavy economic sanctions and hyperinflation, began taking its toll in the early 2000s (Mlambo & Raftopoulos, 2010). However, "the quantitative result is that Zimbabwe has the highest literacy rate in Africa. According to the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) latest [2012] statistical digest, Zimbabwe has a 92% literacy rate" (Shizha & Kariwo, 2012, p. 6).

The Zimbabwean curriculum post-independence has prioritised academic teaching and learning over practical and cultural learning which includes indigenous knowledge

systems (Shizha, 2014). In a bid to address the above educational concern, former Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe stated at the opening of parliament on 17 September, 2013:

> There is need to transform the structure and curriculum of the country's education system in order to adequately meet the evolving national development aspirations. This should see greater focus being placed on the teaching and learning of science, indigenous knowledge and heritage, technology, engineering and mathematics, including a prioritisation of youth empowerment and entrepreneurship development. (Rafomoyo, 2015)

This calls for all school stakeholders to join forces to make education provision a reality in Zimbabwe. Therefore schools are encouraged to actively engage, as learning organisations and beginning with the school heads at the apex of these organisations, in providing diversified opportunities for all learners to develop the knowledge, key skills and attitudes required (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015). The above sentiments aroused my curiosity regarding the need to explore the lived experiences, including the day-to-day activities of school heads as leaders for learning.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In Zimbabwe the academic achievements of the students are used as a proxy for the quality of schooling. There is cause for serious concern over the quality of education provision, especially in terms of teaching and learning, because the national pass rate for 2018 at the Ordinary Level Form Four (equivalent to South Africa's Grade 10) was only 32,83% — an improvement on 2017's 28,70% (Gonye, 2019, p. 1) and the highest it has been since 2008 (Whiz, 2019). Although this improvement is acknowledged, the pass rate is still not satisfactory, as more than two thirds of the candidates who sit for the Ordinary Level examinations do not pass.

This problem of poor academic achievement in Zimbabwean schools therefore needs to be examined. As part of such studies, schools that demonstrate high levels of academic achievement should become research sites. The activities of their school heads in particular should be examined, as a clear understanding of their knowledge and practices

in leading learning could help other school heads to improve their own leadership, and could also inform Zimbabwean educational policies.

In many countries, and in Zimbabwe in particular, the school heads are accountable to various stakeholders for the level of academic achievement, since they occupy the most senior positions in the schools (Lyons, 2010). The head of a school is there to lead, facilitate and manage all aspects that promote learning and all stakeholders, with students as the main focus. The school head must maintain a school ethos that promotes quality learning for all, and improved achievement in all spheres of student learning in a school (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu, & Van Rooyen, 2010). This aligns with the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015–2022 (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2015), which indicates the key role school heads play in creating a school environment or space that gives students an appreciation of their unique identities through learning. The school head must ensure that the main business of the school focuses on whole student learning that includes personal and physical growth. In order to accomplish this, the school heads should be leaders for learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Empirical studies indicate that some school heads have not succeeded in leading learning (Sim, 2011). Given that the school head is the pivot around which the school revolves, my study focuses on the school heads' narratives of how they lead the learning processes in their schools.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The rationale for this study is based on Clandinin's three levels of justification for a narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). The first level is personal justification, which focuses on why the narrative inquiry matters to the researcher as an individual; the second level is practical justification, which looks at the possible contributions the study could make (in this case, to educational leadership practices of school heads); and the third level is social or theoretical justification, which looks at the social impact of the research, and the researcher's possible contribution to existing theory or a new theory (in this case, on LFL) (Clandinin, 2013). My personal justification begins with my story, which explicitly shows my connection to the study.

I am Freedom Chiororo

I am Freedom Chiororo, twin two, born on May 4, 1988 at Mount Selinda hospital in Chipinge District in Zimbabwe. Born into a polygamous family of 14 children, I and my identical twin brother, Kingdom Chiororo, are the seventh and eighth children in the family, with two elder sisters and four elder brothers. Although my father did not pursue further education, he was a visionary and had great respect for education. Growing up in a big family was a tough experience for me, as we had to fight for everything, particularly recognition, love and attention. This concurs with Holborn and Eddy's (2011, p. 4) observation that "children being raised in a home without a father figure tend to experience more emotional and mood disturbances and have less access to health, educational and other support services". It was in school where I first felt recognised and appreciated as a person. I felt valued by teachers and school heads, and this inculcated in me a sense of belonging, as I received some individual attention, which was something I missed in my big family. This aligns with St-Amand, Girard and Smith's (2017) description of individuals as complex beings who feel an innate psychological need to belong to a group, and to get closer to the people who are part of their environment. In addition, people need to be loved and to love; to be cared for and to care for others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). I fell in love with education and always looked forward to going to school, due to the caring school environment that was fostered by the teachers and school head.

After completing my secondary schooling, I enrolled for a teaching degree at Africa University — a Bachelor of Science Education majoring in Business Studies and Accounting. I completed my teaching degree in 2011, and chose to become the best teacher I could be. My positive school experience and the teachers that I admired influenced my career choice to become a teacher. Flores (2001) states that people's own experiences as students, including positive experiences with others in school and having teachers as role models, are the most important influence on their becoming teachers. I wanted to become someone who could touch students' lives like my former teachers and school heads had done with me; in my mind, they often provide important individual attention and care that students do not get from their families. My positive schooling experience in a warm, welcoming environment aroused my curiosity to understand the school head's lived experiences. School heads in any school are the key people responsible for creating and nurturing such environments that are necessary for learning,

and so they should be leaders for learning. As part of my personal justification for conducting narrative research, I intend to explore the lived experiences of the school heads in order to find out if they are key figures in creating school spaces that are more inviting for students to learn. This leads to my first research question "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?"

My practical justification for conducting this narrative inquiry is propelled by my Master's research findings on school decline and school choice in Zimbabwe (Chiororo, 2014). A key finding was that school heads had a role to play in the decline of schools. The school heads were found to contribute to school decline if their leadership style was mostly autocratic, and if this resulted in them excluding other members of staff from decision making in ways that greatly affected their work, or excluding staff members whose expertise was required, leading to poor decision making. My current study aims to explore school heads' everyday life experiences of leading learning, to identify the LFL practices necessary to promote better academic achievement in schools. It is important to explicitly identify aspects of school heads' lived experiences in order to be able to pinpoint where they draw their different meanings and understandings of successful leadership from, for learning as individuals. The practical justification for undertaking this study inspired my second research question: "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?"

The social or theoretical justification for this study is the gap in literature on LFL in the African, and specifically the Zimbabwean, context. In the European context, LFL has been well researched, and is no longer a new phenomenon as it is in other parts of the world, particularly Africa (Dempster, 2012; Hallinger, 2011; Robertson & Timperley, 2011; Townsend & MacBeath, 2011). LFL is an emerging phenomenon in the African context, with research just starting to be done. This research is taking place largely in South Africa, under the banner of instructional leadership (Bhengu & Mhkize, 2013; Bhengu, Naicker, & Mthiyane, 2014; Naicker, Chikoko, & Mthiyane, 2013). Some studies have also been conducted on instructional leadership in Zimbabwe, but none represent the phenomenon of LFL (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013; Masuku, 2011; Nkoma, Taru, & Mapfumo, 2014). Of the abovementioned studies, none use narrative inquiry to produce knowledge. Most of them use quantitative methods such as surveys and a few

interviews; however, narrative inquiry focuses on individual experiences rather than those of a larger group.

The need to understand school leadership and LFL through methods other than quantitative methods had already been raised decades ago by prominent leadership and management gurus. Heck and Hallinger (1999, p. 141) asserted that "the study of educational leadership has been biased through a reliance on quantitative methods, and [that] there exist blind spots in our picture of school leadership". I believe that the ways in which school heads lead learning must be understood by understanding them as individuals, and by understanding their lived experiences. I aim to use narrative inquiry and the power of stories as learning tools to broaden the conceptions of educational leadership, by examining the biographies and narratives of these school heads.

In addition, the process of reflecting on their lives and work can be transformative for the school heads themselves, and can stimulate their learning and development as well as that of future educational leaders. The stories of Zimbabwean school heads are key, as they give voice to some of the untold success stories of leading learning that could contribute to new knowledge. My last research question is therefore, "How do school heads enact their practice as leaders for learning?" This study therefore wishes to contribute to new knowledge on LFL, including possible leadership-for-learning practices, through understanding the lives of school heads who I believe are leading learning successfully in Zimbabwean schools.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Primary research question

What are the lived experiences of school heads as leaders for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?

Secondary research questions

- Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?
- What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?
- How do school heads enact their practice as leaders for learning?

1.6 KEY DEBATES INFORMING THE STUDY

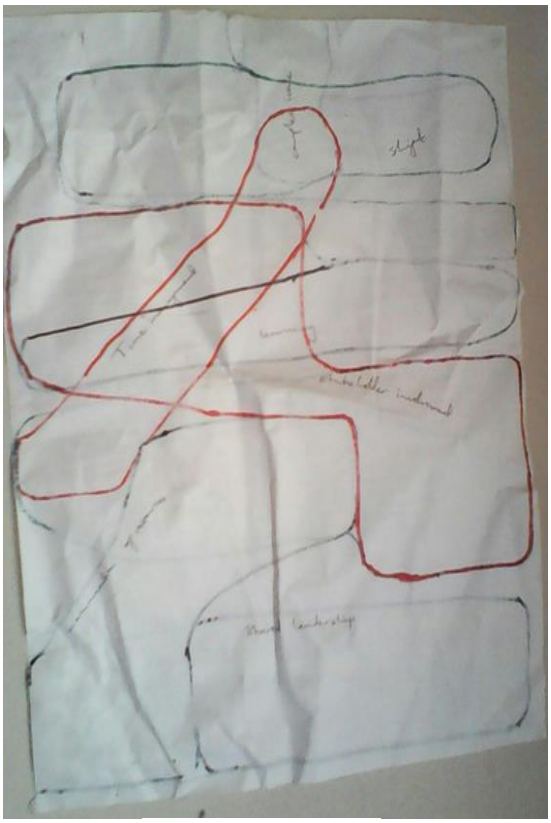
This study employs a recent trend of not having a stand-alone chapter that reviews the relevant literature, as usually occurs in most studies. Rather, I incorporated literature into all the chapters of my study. In making this decision, I consulted some recent PhD theses that were written using this format (Blose, 2018; Masinga, 2013; Naicker, 2014), and decided to adopt a similar approach. This section presents the key debates that inform my study on school heads as leaders for learning, and includes a discussion of how I chose these debates. Considering the body of literature on leadership and learning, in particular LFL, the cited debates are ones that I consider to be of paramount relevance in understanding school heads as leaders for learning. The following are the key debates presented on LFL. They are discussed in sections 1.6.1–1.6.4, and their relevance to the study is explained:

1. Leadership and student learning in schools
2. Leadership and schools as learning communities
3. Key characteristics of LFL and leaders for learning
4. Developing school stakeholders' leadership capacity through LFL.

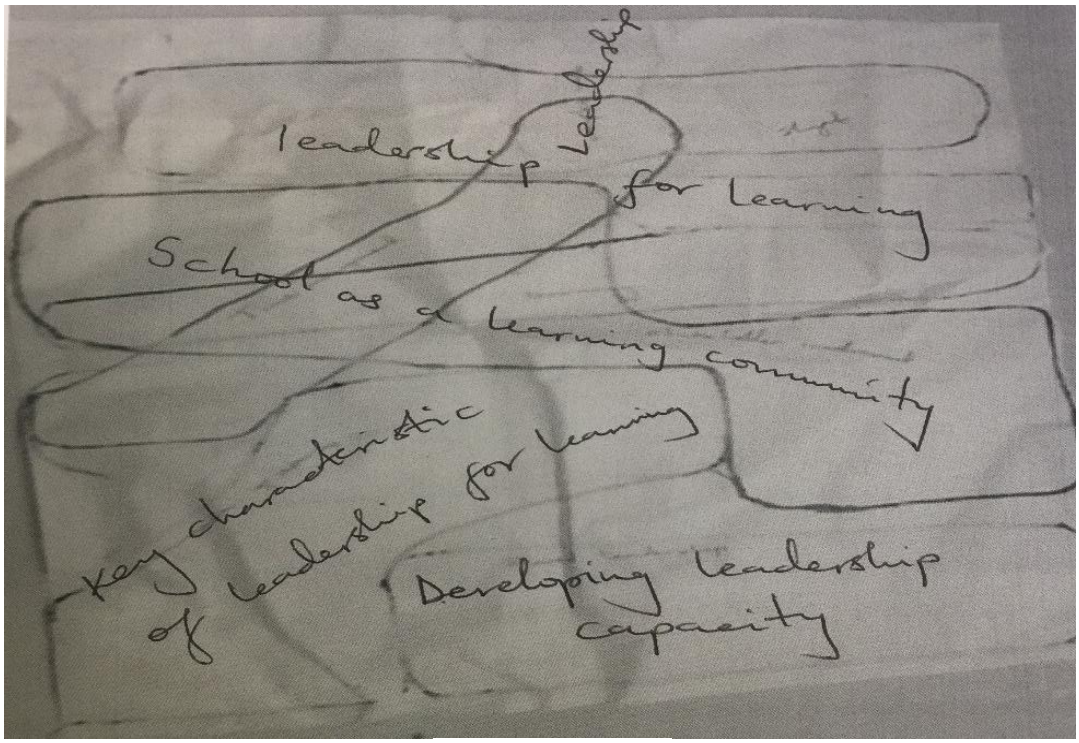
The key debates I present in the following sections evolved from a collage inquiry exercise (see Fig. 1.1) conducted on 17 October 2015 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The collage inquiry exercise was conducted in three stages (captured in the pictures in Fig. 1.1). The first stage was to create a collage in pictures and words of my reading of the literature. After compiling the collage, the second stage was to group pictures and words around common themes. The third and final stage was to select phrases from the themes and organise them into a pantoum[1] poem, titled "Complexity of leadership". The above process was followed to narrow down the broad debates on leadership in general to focus on LFL, which was the phenomenon under study.

[1] According to (Sellers, 2008, p. 3), "The pantoum poem is a poem of indefinite length made up of stanzas whose four lines are repeated in a pattern: lines 2 and 4 of each stanza are repeated as lines 1 and 3 of the next stanza, and so on".

First stage



Second stage



Third stage

Figure 1.1 Collage portrait for literature review exercise in stages

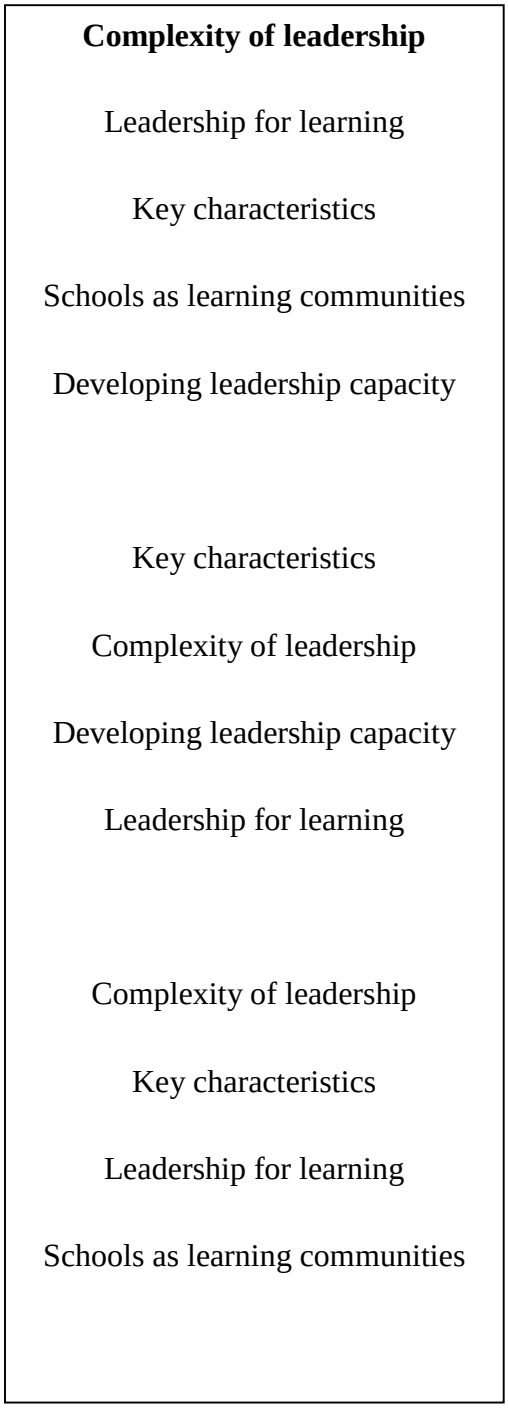


Figure 1.2 Pantoum poem: "Complexity of leadership"

"Leadership" is a highly contested term that is defined by researchers in various ways (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008). In addition, a lot of academics view leadership (and in the context of education in particular, school leadership) as a set of complex processes that relies heavily on human interactions (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Leithwood & Day, 2007). There are many theories on leadership that explain the complexity of the phenomenon

(Werner, 2003), such as transformational leadership (Nel et al., 2008; Robbins & Decenzo, 2007), servant leadership (Tidball, 2012; Trompenaars & Voerman, 2010), trait theories (Zaccaro, 2007), and situational leadership (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2008).

Cote (2017), for example, discusses leadership theories according to four broad categories: trait, behavioural, situational and transformational. Grint (2005) notes that certain reservations about trait theories in leadership have led scholars to shift the focus to behavioural leadership theories. Behaviourist theorists challenge trait theories of leadership, which propose that leaders are born with innate traits, and advocate for leadership to be studied in terms of what they do on a daily basis (Tannenbaum, Weschler & Massarik, 2013). I concur with the behaviourist position, as I believe leadership is a process of human interaction that allows room for people to learn what are considered to be acceptable and productive leadership practices that are beyond their innate abilities, and to unlearn unacceptable and unproductive practices.

Inspired by Hallinger's (2011) observation that after teaching and learning, school leadership, specifically the school principals' influence, is the most important factor in student learning, this study seeks to examine if and how the leadership of particular school heads impacts students learning. I use key words from the pantoum poem, "Complexity of leadership" (Fig. 1.2), to frame the four key debates on LFL, and to explicitly discuss how leadership impacts students' learning.

1.6.1 Leadership and student learning in schools

According to Hallinger (2003), school heads occupy the most difficult position in schools and in the educational system, as the fundamental purpose of the schools they lead is to implement the relevant curriculum for students and maximise students' opportunities to learn. The importance of the role of heads of schools is also acknowledged by Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006, p. 23), who assert that, considering all school factors, only the quality of teaching is more important than the effects of the school leader in determining student academic achievement. Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) confirm the importance of school leadership in making significant improvements in student achievements and learning, and state that school heads should focus on student

learning. They also advocate for instructional leadership, where the focus is primarily students' learning. According to Dimmock and Walker (2000), instructional leadership is also called "leadership of teaching and learning" and "leadership for learning and learning-centred leadership", and they use these terms interchangeably.

Other researchers use the term "instructional leadership" interchangeably with "leadership for learning", like Dimmock and Walker, above; however, I would argue that instructional leadership is a key element of LFL. This is supported by Hallinger (2011, p. 127), who notes that "while the term instructional leadership originally focused on the role of the principal, LFL suggests a broader conceptualisation that incorporates both a wider range of leadership sources as well as additional foci for action". Hallinger (2011, p. 128) states that school heads as instructional leaders need to focus on the "core elements of instructional improvement, including setting a mission, vision, and goals; managing the curriculum and resources; supervising and evaluating teaching; monitoring student learning; and maintaining a positive organisational climate". However, some scholars argue that two other types of learning make a positive contribution to student learning: professional and systems learning.

Knapp, Copland and Talbert (2003) assert that school heads as leaders for learning have an impact on learning in the school that goes beyond the students' learning. They view school heads' practices as inter-related activities based on student learning, professional learning, and systems learning, all of which improve performance in schools (Knapp et al., 2003).

In a recent study by Belle (2018) on LFL, the findings concurred with those of previous studies that successful, whole-student learning incorporates social, moral and grounded academic engagement, in and outside the school environment (King, 2002; Lee & Smith, 1996). The assumption is that teaching and learning in schools cannot take place in isolation if students are to benefit, as social interactions and relationships with stakeholders also impact positively and negatively on student learning (Murphy & Torre, 2014). School heads as leaders for learning are at the core of forming and nurturing social relationships that positively affect students learning. They therefore need to keep up with current communication strategies and the associated technological requirements, for example, and include information and communications technology (ICT) proficiency

among students and all stakeholders in the school vision (Ng, Nguyen, Wong & Choy, 2015).

LFL is therefore an ongoing activity or process that school heads implement to create an environment that facilitates the learning of stakeholders — a key step to ensuring student and school academic achievements (Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall, & Strauss, 2010). In addition, the scope of LFL includes developing every stakeholder's capacity in order to see wide-school instructional improvement and student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Also, school heads should focus on the growth of the leadership identity of all teachers and students, as this has a positive impact on learning and teaching processes and practices (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Pounder, 2008; Wenner & Campbell, 2017).

All the literature above asserts the importance of LFL to ensure effective student learning, and to facilitate effective professional and systems learning. LFL has a wider focus than instructional leadership, although some authors sometimes use the words interchangeably. LFL looks at learning beyond the classroom to cover aspects such as social, technological, spiritual, entrepreneurial and citizenship education, in order to provide a holistic education and whole-student learning. As a researcher, clarifying the concepts of leadership and student learning assisted me in broadening the scope of the research phenomenon when I went to interview the school heads of Zimbabwean schools. I was able to pay attention in the narratives of the school heads to the various approaches they employed to support the learning of all stakeholders in the school, not just the learning outcomes of students, through instructional leadership.

1.6.2 Leadership and schools as learning communities

According to Hallinger (2011), over the past century most school heads have applied instructional leadership as a key effective leadership practice in achieving student learning. Because LFL involves instructional leadership, there is a need to encourage instructional leadership roles for teachers to build learning communities that can improve teaching and learning (Bryant, Escalante, & Selva, 2017; King & Bouchard, 2011; Lai & Cheung, 2015. This illustrates the link between LFL and schools as learning sites where all stakeholders can learn, beginning with the school heads and teachers, to improve students' learning. In addition, Spillane and Louis (2002, p. 100) note that schools as

learning communities require both group and individual engagement in leading learning activities that are "fundamentally focused on improving the core technology of schools, that is, instruction".

A school, as an educational institution and organisation, should provide an environment that enhances students learning with the help of learning communities (Marks & Printy, 2003). Moreover, as learning organisations, schools should encourage consolidated learning at all levels (Senge, 1996, 2003, 2006). Teachers, as members of the school, should form part of the learning community by teaching and learning from each other, in order to improve the quality of the delivery of content to students and also their general overall achievement. Dimmock (2010) advocates the formation of such professional learning communities in schools. In addition, schools that operate as learning communities are more likely to retain effective teachers, according to Kraft, Marinell and Shen-Wei (2016), who also recommend that school heads, as leaders for learning, promote professional learning communities that develop teachers and are characterised by collaborative relationships among teachers (Kraft et al., 2016).

When a school becomes a learning community, the growth of both the individuals and the organisation can take place, which Schaap and de Bruijn (2018) argue has a direct link to improved learning processes and student learning. LFL should also focus on the capacity development of teachers, which is key for positive student learning (King & Bouchard, 2011; Spillane & Louis, 2002). Spillane and Louis (2002, p. 83) argue that the capacity development of teachers is the backbone of school improvement, and they identify it as an "anchor" or key ingredient in improving student learning and strengthening the learning community. Furthermore, Spillane and Louis (2002, p. 95) state that in a community of professionals in a school, teachers employ "new knowledge, skills, and tools . . . as a collective . . . [and] are engaged in a common activity . . . as an ensemble."

In every school, through LFL, the school head is the corner stone of meaningful learning for all school stakeholders (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). The learning of all stakeholders, both those directly and those indirectly involved in the learning of students, cannot left out of the discussion of LFL, as it has been showed to positively contribute to school achievement. In this study I was interested in discovering whether the school heads were

able to turn their schools into learning communities that enrich the learning of all stakeholders, especially the staff, to improve teaching and learning.

1.6.3 Key characteristics of leadership for learning and leaders for learning

Various scholars emphasise different aspects of the characteristics of LFL, but the following three relate specifically to school heads: resource allocation, governance and vision (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring & Porter, 2007). In addition, leaders for learning should be able to maximise the available assets and resources of the school, such as time, people and money, in support of school improvement and effective teaching and learning (Day & Sammons, 2013). Ahmad and Ghavifekr (2017) note that in relation to school leaders, LFL is basically the same as instructional leadership, since the sole purpose of the school is instruction, as learning is the core business of any educational institution. In addition, a shared vision is a key skill of transformation leadership, and is necessary for adapting to the ever changing educational demands.

Robinson et al. (2008, p. 8) promote the following two key practices for school heads: "establishing goals and expectations" and "planning, co-ordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum". Even though school heads do not actually teach students in the classroom, their actions and decisions have an indirect effect on students' learning and achievements (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Hallinger (2011) identifies the following LFL practices as having the greatest effect on student achievement: "establishing shared academic goals", "building social networks and structures that enable goal achievement", "being directly involved in instructional supervision and support", "building teacher capacity and providing high quality teacher learning", "caring for staff as individuals", and having "good problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills" (Hallinger, 2011).

Dimmock (2010) concurs with Hallinger and Heck (1996) that school heads leading learning indirectly improves students' learning outcomes, and is mediated through the teachers. Based on this, Dimmock (2010) asserts the need for school heads to lead learning to inspire and motivate other stakeholders to take ownership of and accountability for their duties, to ensure quality learning for students. Kraft et al. (2016) focus on measuring teacher effectiveness, and on various ways to improve teacher effectiveness to improve students' learning. They acknowledge the school environment

and climate as contributors to teachers' performance, and hence student learning. It is important for school heads as leaders for learning to factor in the emotions and work environment of all stakeholders, and to determine how people feel and achieve in and outside the classroom. School heads as leaders for learning are responsible for creating, nurturing and improving the school climate, in order to promote gains in students' academic achievement, especially in relation to school safety and academic expectations.

Leaders for learning are often described as grounded individuals who have a vision, who are quick thinkers, and who are able to direct different groups within the school towards a common goal (Mahoney, 2001). Effective LFL requires problem-solving abilities and group cohesion skills, including being versatile and inclusive of other stakeholders (Frankel, 2008). This concurs with Bondas's (2006) finding that respected leaders easily inspire their stakeholders. Leaders for learning are inspirational, and model positive and constructive behaviours that can be incorporated into the school culture (Frankel, 2008).

LFL begins with a shared vision, sense of purpose and direction shaped by the school head. This vision is supported by all stakeholders, who work together to make it a reality. The actions and practices of the school heads contribute either positively or negatively to create and nurture a school space where all stakeholders are either motivated or demotivated, which results in either successful or poor student learning.

Understanding the key characteristics of LFL prompted me to find out whether Zimbabwean school heads share their vision of and direction for their schools with the other interested stakeholders. Their management of scarce resources — human, monetary and time — in turning their vision into reality, was particularly important to me as a researcher.

1.6.4 Developing school stakeholders' leadership capacity through leadership for learning

School management is a complicated task for school heads, and there is an urgent need to develop the leadership capacity of all school stakeholders (Marron & Cunniff, 2014). LFL should be the responsibility of all stakeholders, including students and teachers, and not only that of school management team members (Dimmock, 2010). Leithwood (2006)

concurs, noting that LFL seems to be more effective when it is shared among all stakeholders and all levels of the organisation. LFL is widely supported and constructive in a school if all stakeholders are brought on board and have a say in how learning should take place in different ways in the school. Currently, school heads are adopting a leadership approach that is part of LFL called "distributive leadership" (Naicker & Mestry, 2013). Harris and Muijs (2005) advocate distributive LFL, as it offers opportunities for all stakeholders to take a leadership role in their own right within the school organisation.

Teacher leadership is another way to distribute leadership in a way that enhances LFL, and is aimed at developing the leadership capacity of teachers. It acknowledges the need for school heads to relinquish some of their autonomy to teachers through delegation, in order for teachers to also be able to exercise leadership (Harris, 2003). School heads as leaders for learning can extend leadership opportunities through sharing leadership or delegating to teachers. This is a powerful way to acknowledge the diversity that teachers bring to schools, which could be used in multiple ways to the advantage of the students (Harris & Lambert, 2003). School heads lead learning by creating and supporting structures within their schools that allow leadership to be distributed and shared, for LFL to become a reality (Harris & Lambert, 2003). In addition, visionary leaders develop other teachers to be able to become future leaders (Fullan, 2001). School heads should become "leaders of leaders" (Harris & Lambert, 2003, p. 45).

In a more recent study, Salloum, Goddard and Berebitsky (2018) highlight the need to develop leadership capacity and LFL through fostering close-knit social relationships among all school stakeholders. They note that this social capital can contribute more to the learning and academic achievement of students than monetary investments. Salloum et al. (2018, p. 283) define social capital as "a network of relationships between school officials, teachers, parents and the community that builds trust and norms, promoting academic achievement". The school heads as leaders for learning are responsible for driving social capital through being inclusive, and through adopting a participative and consultative approach to management that is appropriate for modern organisations. LFL should be a collective activity, rather than being left up to the school head as the first citizen of the school (King, 2002). This involves a shift in perception from viewing leadership in a narrow way to viewing it as a broader concept that is the responsibility of

all school stakeholders (Harris, 2011). This broader conception of leadership is supported by most current research, which recommends that the notion of "leadership for learning" should include features of shared leadership, instructional leadership, distributive leadership and transformational leadership (Hallinger, 2011).

Understanding different perspectives on school stakeholders' leadership capacity assisted me in identifying the various leadership styles employed in leading learning by the Zimbabwean heads of school. It also enabled me to establish whether leadership was shared, and if so, how it was shared and which stakeholders shared it, as well as how all the above contributed to the success of their schools.

1.6.5 A summary of the four debates

The four key debates on LFL reveal that it is a complex phenomenon that requires stakeholders to work together in actively leadership roles as part of capacity development aimed at improving student learning (Hallinger, 2011). Ahmad and Ghavifekr (2017) conclude that today every stakeholder is a leader whose input matters, which effectively sums up LFL. They also recommend that LFL be effectively implemented at all organisational levels of a school, by offering all stakeholders a chance to contribute positively to the success of the organisation. Ahmad and Ghavifekr (2017, p. 1) conclude that

> school leadership is to facilitate learning or leadership for learning not merely student learning (curriculum based), but learning for all school stakeholders, including governance, towards making the school a place to learn, albeit not undermining the importance of the school head in promoting a learning environment.

The above four debates are important to Zimbabwean school heads, as they relate directly to their everyday leading of learning in schools. Leadership is a complex phenomenon that is not prescribed but is rather experiential, and calls for different actions according to different situations. It also involves the transformation of leaders themselves and their organisations, contrary to the traditional trait theory that leaders are born, suggesting rather that leaders are made and can be developed through learning and context.

The first key debate shows how school heads could facilitate learning in their schools, which is the core purpose of schools. The second debate shows that this is only possible if school heads create communities of learning that include all school stakeholders. Learning communities promote teaching and learning, which should translate into improved student academic achievement. The third debate shows that defining the mission, vision and values of the school and culture is important, as it sets the necessary atmosphere conducive to learning. The use of scare resources, both financial and human, to turn the school vision, mission, values and culture into reality, is also of paramount importance. Finally, developing school stakeholders' leadership capacity is important for creating distributive leadership that is inclusive of all stakeholders, which is a condition necessary for successful leading of learning. The four debates sum up the everyday LFL practices of school heads, and show the importance of understanding school heads and their leadership in relation to the context within which they live with other stakeholders. In Chapter 2 I explain the need to understand leadership as a collective group process and how individuals within groups work together as a collective to get things done by and through others.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following concepts inform my study: leadership and management, school head, leadership for learning, leadership practices, and lived experiences.

1.7.1 Leadership and management

Scholars define leadership in various ways (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008). In a seminal study by Northouse (2007), it is shown that leadership is a process that happens where groups exist, is geared towards achieving prescribed goals, and revolves around influence. I define leadership as a transformative activity by means of which school heads or any other stakeholders, regardless of their position in the school, influence other stakeholders to willingly work towards shared goals. The aim is to create an effective and conducive teaching and learning environment which translates into higher student academic achievement. Leadership and management are intertwined, and both have to be explained

according to how one uses them. Leadership subsumes management, which includes standard maintenance through controlling, coordinating and most of all planning (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Leadership and management complement each other, and both are required for any organisation to succeed (Grant, 2009).

1.7.2 School head

School head is an equivalent term for headmaster, head teacher or school principal. In Zimbabwe, the term school head is used for both government and non-government head teachers that act as the chief executive officer in the school (Samkange, 2013). In this study a school head manages limited school resources, be they financial, human or physical resources such as land or property. School heads set a shared vision and mission through performing management, administrative and leadership functions aimed at student learning (Hallinger, 2011). In addition, they create and support an effective teaching and learning environment by co-ordinating all school stakeholders, and they are liable for the school students' academic achievements in public examinations.

1.7.3 Leadership for learning

Instructional leadership used to be considered the hallmark of effective schools in America (Bridges, 1967), until the late 1980s when criticisms began to be levelled against this model of school leadership. Criticisms of instructional leadership as the most appropriate model of leadership for heads of school to employ to encourage academic improvement, led researchers to examine alternative models such as shared, distributive and transformative leadership (Hallinger, 2011). Further research on suitable leadership approaches supports the model of "leadership for learning", which seems to combine all the above-mentioned models into one (Hallinger, 2011).

LFL is an internationally recognised term, and it is considered particularly important in Europe and Asia (Robinson et al., 2008). However, it has not been extensively explored in the African context. Hallinger and Heck (2011, p. 157), leading scholars in educational leadership and management, state that "Leadership for learning signals, among other things, the critical role that leadership plays in creating and sustaining a school-wide focus

on learning". It is not simply students who should be learning in schools; stakeholders such as teachers and parents should be learning too. In this study, LFL involves all spheres and aspects that school heads implement and monitor to attain learning for all. The school heads are responsible for creating, nurturing and supporting sustainable structures that promote a shared leadership, promote a shared vision, and allocate both human and financial resources to make learning for all a reality and priority.

1.7.4 Leadership practices

Leadership, as part of human interactions in schools, is based on the context in which the stakeholders find themselves (Naicker, 2015). The daily activities that school heads perform to ensure a suitable learning environment, including how they lead by example in how to teach and how to conduct oneself, constitute their practice of leading learning. The study highlights some of the LFL practices of Zimbabwean school heads necessary for today's current school needs. Leadership practices are daily activities undertaken by school heads with the aim of achieving their mission and vision of educating all stakeholders. An example of a leadership practice could be a school head teaching and modelling instructional leadership through co-operating with other teachers to improve instructional practice in classes that perhaps translates into both improved teaching and learning, and student academic achievement.

1.7.5 Lived experiences

In order to understand how my participants lead learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools, I had to explore their lived experiences. People's lived experiences "are the individual's expressions of his/her singular view of the everyday world conveyed in words, personal feelings, attitudes and behaviours" (Hong, 2011, p. ii). In addition, Chandler and Munday (2011) define lived experiences as the knowledge one accumulates on a day-to-day basis as first-hand experiences through contact with the people one interacts with and world one lives in. The heads in any school lead learning by borrowing from their past experiences, in order to create an impact on the current and future school beliefs and aspirations. I explored school heads' experiences of leading learning in

Zimbabwean schools, as they are experts on their own life journeys. Their experiences were an eye opener in terms of how they think, feel and lead learning by using their past experiences to construct meanings and understandings of the current world and position in school. School heads from high academic achieving schools were selected because I believed that they had stories in the form of lived experiences of leading learning. The stories of their lived experiences that they shared were later analysed in order to establish a deeper understanding of how they lead learning in Zimbabwean schools.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Seven chapters make up this thesis. This chapter has provided insight into the study by introducing the background to the study and discussing the rationale to the study, by identifying the research questions, and by clarifying the concepts underpinning the study. In addition, the key debates on LFL and how they inform my study have been discussed in the form of a literature review. This first chapter has also offered the reader a general outline of the entire study, including what is expected in the following chapters.

Chapter Two outlines the theoretical underpinnings of my study, and discusses Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory (SIT) and Hallinger's (2011) leadership for learning model (LLM). How these theories contribute to the framework of study is also highlighted, including how they assisted me in gathering my findings and analysing the data.

Chapter Three presents my methodology and research design, and focuses on narrative inquiry and the reasons why I chose it. Lived experiences are understood better narratively, so narrative inquiry was selected as the preferred technique for understanding school heads' lived experiences through their stories, as all human beings lead storied lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990).

Chapter Four explains my initial analysis (narrative analysis) comprising the transformation of my data (field texts) into research texts. This process involved synthesising the participants' stories gathered through narrative interviews, collage inquiry, artefact inquiry and transect walk into a narrative, for the purpose of responding

to my first question: “Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?”

Chapter Five addresses my second research question: “What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?” This chapter explores the (professional and personal) lives school heads lead through an analysis of their narratives.

Chapter Six addresses the third research question: “How do school heads enact their practice as leaders of learning?” Inductive analysis was used to present thick descriptions in order to respond to the above question.

Chapter Seven presents my perceptions of the three data analysis chapters (Four, Five and Six), which inform my conclusions. I conclude the chapter with my key learnings on Zimbabwean school heads as leaders for learning, based on their narratives and my final reflections.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The chapter has presented the background to the study and the statement of the problem. My rationale for conducting this narrative inquiry was explained according to Clandinin’s (2013) three levels of justification for a narrative inquiry. Also included in this chapter were my key questions, clarifications of the concepts I used, and a breakdown of how my study has been organised.

The following chapter outlines in detail Hallinger’s (2011) Leadership for Learning model and social identity theory, which are merged to create the framework that informs the study, and which complement each other in enabling me to understand the lives of my participants as leaders for learning.

CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, I presented the background to the study, the rationale for the study and literature that highlighted the key debates that inform the study. Theories provide a framework for understanding a given phenomenon (Silverman, 2006). Thus, I chose Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory (SIT) and Hallinger's (2011) Leadership for Learning Model (LLM) as a lens to help me understand and make meaning of LFL. SIT provides a framework to understand who the school heads are and what constitutes their identities as individuals who lead learning in schools. This allowed me to see how the school heads negotiate who they are as leaders and individuals within and outside the school context. SIT provided me with a lens to explore LFL by studying the school heads' lived experiences. These inform the practices they adopt when relating with people in various contexts and when assuming multiple identities in their everyday lives. The LLM was used to understand how school heads' understandings of LFL affect their choice of resources, support, leadership practices and leadership styles in making learning possible in their schools. SIT and the LLM were merged into a theoretical framework that I used to analyse my data.

A discussion of SIT forms the first part of the chapter, and includes a discussion of the terms that broadly constitute SIT: social categorisation, self-categorisation, social comparison, social identification, self-esteem, and social cohesion. These categories reflect how one classifies one's self in different contexts (Ellemers, Haslam, Platow & Van Knippenberg, 2003). Also included is a discussion of the link between SIT and leadership, which focuses specifically on how they interact in a school context. The LLM is discussed in terms of the four key concepts that underpin it: values and leadership, leadership focus, context for leadership, and sources of leadership. The final part of the chapter highlights how SIT and LLM can be combined into a framework, and how that framework informs the study.

2.2 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

The identities of people, objects and things are uniquely defined and distinguished by themselves and others. Bauman (1988) explains that identity answers the following questions for individuals: "Who am I?" "How should I live?" "Who do I want to become?" Although people contribute to constructing their own identities, these identities have to be understood in relation to other people, in relation to their context, and in relation to their cultural beliefs. These external, social factors inform SIT. According to Hogg, Terry and White (1995), a person's identity is socially constructed and is informed by the perceptions of family, peers and other individuals that a person encounters in various social contexts. SIT provides a perspective on individual behaviour, cognition and emotions that takes into account the co-influences on a person's identity within society and organisations (Hogg et al., 1995). SIT was deemed the most suitable identity theory for this study, as leaders need to be understood in relation to others. Also, social context is an important factor in how school heads relate to others. It influences how they lead their lives (personally and professionally), and is therefore an important factor to consider in a study on how school heads lead learning in Zimbabwean schools.

SIT was originally developed as a social psychological theory for understanding intergroup relations, and recently it has been applied to organisations such as schools. A school is an organised unit of cooperating stakeholders, which includes teachers, school heads, parents, students and support staff, all working towards a collective goal of educating students. The stakeholders of the school are bound together in relationships that are affected by the structures of the school, which inform the way they conduct themselves in and outside the school context. Thus, classifying oneself as belonging or affiliated to a group defines one's social identity (Burke & Stets, 2009). Groups can be considered "in-groups" or "out-groups". In-groups are groups that the school heads belong to, for example the school management team (SMT), the school development association (SDA) and the teachers' union, whereas out-groups are the groups they do not belong to.

In addition, SIT involves "a psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in group membership, group processes, and intergroup relations" (Hogg, 2006, p. 111). Leading learning is a human process that takes place with different groups of stakeholders who share a collective vision, and school heads' behaviours should align to these various group

for a successful team effort (Hogg, 2006). This knowledge may assist school heads to effectively coordinate and exercise leadership in schools, as schools are made up of groups of people with different functions working for the common purpose of imparting knowledge.

In schools, the stakeholder's view of the self also relates to the social role that they assume within group contexts in and outside the school. Intrinsic in SIT is the idea that analysing the school head's leadership practice alone is not enough to explain why and how schools achieve well academically; the behaviours of the school head, the students and the teachers need to be analysed and understood (Hogg, 2001, 2006). School heads need to understand and master this group complexity among stakeholders for positive LFL to take place. Fundamentally, the aim of using SIT is not to average behaviours among individuals, but instead to look at how the school stakeholders function as a group in leading learning. Of importance is the idea that the individuals in the school accept, connect to and identify with the particularly defined school in question, and align their behaviours, thinking and loyalty accordingly (Hogg, 2006). This influences how stakeholders impact LFL, and hence student academic achievement.

SIT is a state of mind according to which one classifies oneself as belonging to or identifying with a certain group of people, and one adapts and fine tunes one's behaviour to meet a standard of acceptable behaviours. In this study, in the context of schools, SIT is important, as teachers, staff members and students within schools need to consider themselves active foot soldiers that serve the needs of student learning. Hence, the environment within schools should nurture the health of the group by fostering team interdependence, thereby forming an overall power team geared towards successful LFL. Forming departments that group subjects and their teachers could be one approach for promoting a sense of oneness and belonging for the individual stakeholders involved.

SIT considers school heads and the school stakeholders' active participation in creating social identifications (the groups they belong to, such as football teams or book clubs). Reicher and Hopkins (2001, 2003) note that the school head's ability to manage people in their various groups and to promote a shared collective identity enables him/her to harness a collective effort aimed at making the school vision a reality. It is through team work and active participation that school members are able to introduce their own unique identities that form part of their school culture. Thus, school heads become creators or

pacesetters of new identities that followers assume from them, as they are seen as role models. Hogg and Reid (2001) find that when social identity is part if LFL practices, various groups of school stakeholders (teachers, parents, students, staff and wider community) are more inclined to function as one coherent group that willingly contributes to the success of the school. This theory is useful for this study, as it highlights how the school head as a group member views, motivates, and shares common goals and the school's vision and mission with his staff members in a particular school. Below is a discussion of the key elements of SIT (social categorisation, self-categorisation, social comparison, social identification, self-esteem and social cohesion), how they are employed in SIT, and how they contribute to this study.

2.2.1 Social categorisation

Individuals are defined and grouped according to categories and clusters, by means of which they align their thoughts and interrelationships with other individuals and groups, in society and within organisations like schools. According to Emerson (1960, p. 53), "A nation is a body of people who feel that they are a nation". If people think of themselves as a group, then they are a group, and this can be defined as social categorisation. School stakeholders should feel that they are a group representing the school and children's educational needs. According to Abrams and Hogg, "Social identity theory assigns a central role to the process of categorisation which partitions the world into comprehensible units" (1990, p. 2). Social categorisation happens when people begin identifying themselves as belonging to a certain group, and placing others into various social groups (Ellemers, De Gilder & Haslam, 2003). An in-group is the group in which one belongs and under LFL, school heads belong to different school groups such as the SMT, the instructional leadership team and the academic evaluation and monitoring group. Out-groups are groups to which one does not belong (Ellemers et al., 2003). Examples of an out-group could be the different departments in the school that not all teachers belong to. Social categorisation is when the stakeholders of a school, including the school head, automatically put themselves and others into groups. The stakeholders see themselves as one group (the in-group, which consists of members of the school) and the non-school stakeholders automatically become an out-group. Usually, the school head

is part of all groups, and so is in the position of being simultaneously in everyone's in-groups while also being part of each person's out-groups.

Additionally, social categorisations are seen as cognitive tools that position individuals to claim membership of certain groups. For example, school teachers would claim membership of different subject departments based on their teaching subjects. For school stakeholders to gain a positive social identity within the school, the school head should make the school group as a whole easily accessible, should share leadership, and should encourage active participation in decisions affecting stakeholders' work environment, values, beliefs, purposes and goals. This could provide stakeholders with a definition of who they are as a school, through group or school membership (Hogg, 2006). This could foster a sense of unity amongst all school members.

2.2.2 Self-categorisation

In understanding SIT there is a need to unpack self-categorisation theory. Self-categorisation theory emphasises how individuals interact with others, and accept expectations and obligations as members of a group, according to how they feel a sense of belonging to one group over another. This self-categorisation, and self-identification with the group, becomes the basis of their attitudes and behaviours in given situations (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). An example of this would be when a school department contains people who see themselves as a distinguished team, possibly due to excellent performance. This sense of group achievement would encourage members to self-categorise themselves as a separate group from the broader school team.

The school head should be conscious of the affective needs of stakeholders that are expressed as self-categorisation. This involves a mental shift from viewing situations from an individual perspective to viewing situations from a group's perspective, in order to identify and understand the group's needs, behaviours and loyalties. This process could be enhanced in schools through encouraging teamwork and cooperation among stakeholders, through appreciating all stakeholders, through holding departmental meetings where specific group targets are set, and through recognising group or team success instead of individual efforts in the various school departments.

When individuals categorise themselves as belonging to or being affiliated with a particular group, this leads them to put the needs of the group members ahead of other people's needs, which could be considered a form of favouritism based on group affiliation. However, this could equally foster loyalty and dedication. In a school context, stakeholders who see themselves as making a valuable contribution and who see themselves as team members tend to want to contribute more, since they develop a bond with other school stakeholders, and develop a sense of purpose and identity. This could lead to school team members favouring behaviours and attitudes that promote school goals rather than personal gain or interest. I conclude that trust can be built through self-categorisation, which is a key resource in human relationships for any group and for schools. School heads should create schools that have a shared purpose through valuing and harnessing the different expertise and contributions of all stakeholders (Van Vugt & Hart, 2004). SIT highlights how school heads could create a sense of group purpose, membership, belonging and loyalty, in order to promote intergroup behaviour on the part of all school stakeholders that favours a positive school identity.

2.2.3 Social comparison

In SIT, social comparison (where people compare themselves to others) complements social categorisation. Corcoran, Crusius and Mussweiler (2011) explain that social comparison is a process where individuals are driven to self-evaluate and compare themselves or their group to other individuals or groups, according to specific, relevant criteria. An example of social comparison is when teachers evaluate their current school against other schools in order to assess whether to leave their current school if they feel it is inferior or offers less than they expect (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In a school context the evaluation criteria could be a school's achievements, its enrolment figures, the incentives and benefits it offers its staff, its leadership style, and its inclusion of stakeholders in the running of school affairs. Knowledge of the criteria for social comparison can assist school heads to retain key staff, teachers and students, because the most capable stakeholders will readily leave in favour of better opportunities if their current school does not compare favourably with others.

Social comparison includes the act of evaluating the total benefits that a group and its members offer to individual members, which individuals normally use to make comparisons when they encounter opportunities to affiliate with another group (Ellemers et al., 2003). In order to maintain their existence, schools need to have members who have a similar outlook on life (a shared school vision and mission) and on the events happening to them. Simon and Pettigrew (1990) discuss some consequences of uniformity by suggesting that individuals who tend to identify themselves with the group also tend to have strong connections with the group, and believe that their personal attachments and values are of secondary importance. School heads, as leaders in the school, should create, coordinate and nurture a collective feeling of "us" (Haslam, 2001). This is because schools have a better chance of succeeding when their members work in teams and as a group, especially when members have strong connections among themselves that lead them to value their group efforts rather than depending on their individual efforts.

2.2.4 Social identification

After social comparison, individuals find a social identity in their in-group. When individuals in a school have a social identity, they act as representatives of a group rather than as individuals. In a school, stakeholders associate and identify with their school based on the feelings and values they attach to being members (Tajfel, 1972). In addition, Tajfel (1982) argues that people who belong to a school automatically think of that school as their in-group (us) and all other schools as an out-group (them). Thus, individuals tend to favour their in-group and identify with each other socially, leading to what Tajfel (1982) calls "positive distinctiveness". School heads should foster this feeling of positive social distinctiveness in their stakeholders through social identification (Tajfel, 1982).

Positive distinctiveness can be achieved when school members see themselves as a collective "we" instead of an individualistic "I" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This is possible, as social identification capitalises on the homogeneity of ideas and practices of team members to make them value collectivism instead of individualism (Stets & Burke, 2000). The school head should encourage school members to think, act and behave in a similar way, according to a carefully formulated and shared school vision, mission, culture, norms and values. This could be the basis of a successful school that achieves it goals and

objectives. A school that has a strong group identity functions as a close-knit group, which boosts the stakeholders' sense of belonging and self-worth. The school head can motivate all stakeholders by showing that being a school member of that particular school is preferable to being a member of another school. The school head should use positive distinctiveness to the benefit of the school by enhancing it through the above-mentioned means.

2.2.5 Self-esteem

SIT proposes that individuals strive for self-esteem (Turner, 1982). Tajfel (1972) states that the need for self-enhancement and boosting one's self-image is crucial in promoting a positive social identity — a key determinant of behaviour in groups. The founding father of social comparison theory is Festinger (1954), who asserts that the conscious and subconscious actions and behaviours of individuals define them as groups. Through these definitions they aim to scale their positive esteem which comes through comparison of self and groups affiliated (Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979). Belonging to a group is the first important step of self-conceptualisation and categorisation (e.g. a teacher at a school), and hence is a stepping stone into social comparison. Interestingly, the harder it is for school members to leave a school, the more they compare their school with other lower status schools that boost their self-esteem. The school head should bear in mind that school members seem to have the ability to tie their emotions, especially high self-esteem, to their school membership. This means that being a member of any school must create a sense of pride in stakeholders if they are to contribute meaningfully to the success of that school. The school head should identify specific cultural elements that provide information about the school's identity, and specific processes and methods that produce distinguished academic achievement, in order to create a prestigious and attractive image, which boosts the members' self-esteem.

2.2.6 Social cohesion

Social cohesion is the extent to which group members view one another as part of the same group (Hogg & Turner, 1987). This is an important aspect in schools, where there are various teams and departments working together to meet the students' needs and assist them in achieving their educational objectives. Leaders in schools should enhance cooperation within these teams to harmonise their activities and create synergies. All school stakeholders can do this through forming communities of practice, or learning communities that value learning. Having stakeholders work as units and teams is only possible if the school head emphasises social cohesion, shared leadership and collectivism over individualism and individual group members' desire to achieve (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1988). Social cohesion is important, and school heads should minimise internal conflicts over resources, especially between departments, and should promote cohesion to achieve synergy between all departments that enables the school to achieve its educational goals and targets.

2.3 SOCIAL IDENTITY AND LEADERSHIP

In the past few years, there has been an increased need to understand group dynamics and behaviours, including the thought processes of people in the same and different social groups (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). SIT has been analysed in diverse ways in relation to different phenomena, including leadership (Robinson, 1996), and has shown the possibility of understanding leadership as a process conducted in a group by all members. Leadership is a collective group process, in which all members are actively involved in inspiring each other, regardless of their position or level in the organisation, to mutually work towards the mission and vision of their school. Hence, understanding the groups in a school context is key to this study, as noted in the summary of key debates on leadership for learning in section 1.6. The summary states the need to understand the actions and behaviours of school heads and their leadership for learning practices in relation to the context within which they function with other stakeholders. Hogg (2003) emphasises the need for school stakeholders to identify with a common group in order to harmoniously pursue the same cause of learning for all. Understanding leadership through SIT is important, as school members bring diverse elements to the group dynamic from their

various upbringings, religions, cultures and experiences. This study shows various ways in which the heads of schools inspire and influence all school stakeholders towards achieving a collective educational goal, regardless of their different personal and professional identities, and social backgrounds.

The social identity model for leadership in schools emphasises group processes that see all stakeholders, including the school head, as equal members collaborating to achieve a common goal. The above demonstrates the need to understand the leadership style of school heads, and also whether they believe in team work, shared ownership and shared leadership, including the involvement of school stakeholders in decision making through the delegation of responsibility. The school head should value the contributions of others towards school achievement, and should also share leadership with them and increase their autonomy and accountability to show them that he/she believes and trusts in their abilities, judgments and decisions. Schools heads should be exemplars of the acceptable behaviours, norms, values and beliefs that could reflect as the school culture and identity (Giessner & van Knippenberg, 2008). In this study, SIT offered an opportunity to understand and unpack the lived experiences of the school heads as both group members and leaders, and their impact on leading learning as a group process in attaining academic excellence in their schools.

2.4 LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

According to Hallinger (2011), instructional leadership was the founding leadership model in understanding effective schools. Criticism of instructional leadership gave rise to competing leadership models and finally to the current model of leadership for learning (LFL). Researchers in the first decades of the new millennium extended their research on leadership to include competing models that went beyond instruction and leadership (Wiley, 2001). These models includes distributed leadership (Gronn, 2009), shared leadership (Barth, 1990) and transformational leadership (Silins, 1994). The body of knowledge generated was aimed at defining these constructs and at understanding students' learning in relation to leadership (Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall, & Strauss, 2010; Southworth, 2002). According to Hallinger (2011), "leadership for learning" constitutes a variety of leadership models that focus on instructional, shared and

transformational leadership (Hallinger, 2003). The abovementioned scholars offer convincing evidence based on empirical research that the LLM is the most balanced approach to leading learning aimed at school improvement and effectiveness.

2.4.1 Leadership for learning model

According to Hallinger (2011, p. 126), "leadership for learning describes activities and methods used by school leaders to attain school outcomes with student learning at the heart of everything". In addition, he notes how the concept of "leadership for learning" moves beyond instructional leadership, as it focuses on multiple sources of leadership (Hallinger, 2011). The model portrayed in Figure 2.1 synthesises Hallinger's (2011) conceptualisation of LLM, formulated after careful consideration of other scholars' research on leadership over the past three decades.

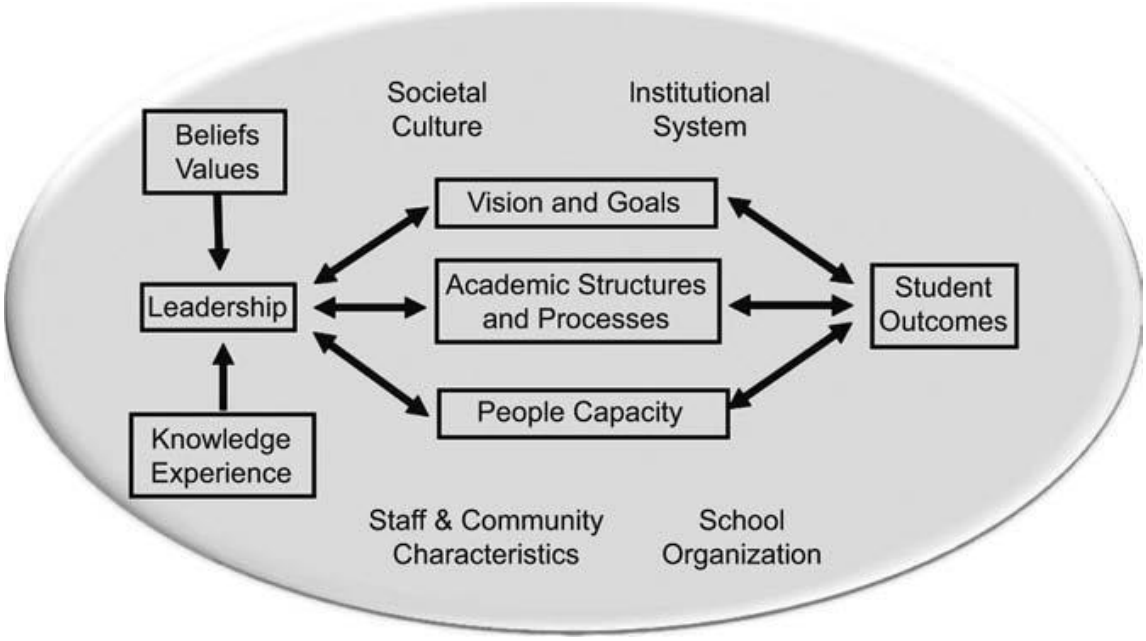


Figure 2.1 Leadership for Learning Model by Hallinger (2011)

The above model emphasises key premises of LFL. Firstly, organisational and environmental contexts such as schools allow leadership as a process to happen. School leaders do not operate in isolation, but rather function in an "open system" made up of

elements of societal culture, community and institutional systems that are in constant interaction (Hallinger, 2011). It is important for school heads to know that the effectiveness of their leadership depends on their ability to take advantage of the opportunities that the wider environment presents, and to curb threats that might challenge the existence of the organisation (Hallinger, 2011). Secondly, the personal characteristics of the leaders determine how they exercise their leadership in schools. Specifically highlighted are their personal knowledge, beliefs, and values, and how they experience the world, which brings produce variations in how school heads practise their leadership. Thirdly, the model suggests that there is no direct relationship between leadership and students' learning, but that there are conditions that foster an indirect relationship. These conditions are the school environment, and the design and structure of the organisation. In addition, the double-headed arrows in Figure 2.1 suggest that school leadership both influences and is influenced by these school-level conditions (Hallinger, 2011, p. 127). Lastly, leadership is framed as clearly directed towards particular learning outcomes and student growth, although it involves more than these two elements.

Hallinger's LLM model has been adopted for this study because it offers a broader perspective for understanding the relationship between leadership and students' learning that moves beyond instruction. This wider focus includes other issues such as transformation and shared leadership, which have been shown to enhance student learning in school settings outside Africa, in North America, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe (Hallinger, 2011). In this study the model, the LLM is the basis from which I attempted to understand the relationship between the nature of Zimbabwean school heads' leadership and its contribution to student learning and the overall improvement of their schools. The LLM has four dimensions, which are discussed in the following sections: values, focus, context, and sources of leadership.

2.4.1.1 Values and leadership

Values-based leadership in LLM, portrayed in Figure 2.1, conceptualises leadership as clearly aimed at improving student learning (Hallinger, 2011). In addition, it also articulates the importance of individual values and culture in shaping the school heads'

leadership. According to Hallinger (2011), leadership is informed by values, as values form the basis for understanding of how people lead their personal and professional lives. Wolk (2000) challenges school heads to define their role as leaders for learning by answering the question, "What do we want from our schools and students?" When school heads define and prioritise the school's "terminal values", they foreground the main reason for the existence of that particular school. A school's values generally include equality in learning and growth, social development, community service, virtue, and academic achievement (Wolk, 2000). Through exploring the lived experiences of school heads, this study aims to highlight some of their cultural and personal values that contribute to the successful leading of learning in schools.

In addition, Wolk (2000) notes the need for the school head to address "instrumental values". As individuals, school heads differ, and this is shown by their different lived experiences; however, to achieve their vision for their schools, school heads need to rely on their instrumental values. School heads should innovate, model, nurture, promote and encourage others in working towards achieving their goals as a school. According to Wolk (2000), this can be done through promoting and nurturing self-discipline, caring, integrity, mutual respect, fairness, interdependence and taking risks. Each school has its own unique set of values that guide how members, including the school head, relate to and behave towards one another. It was interesting as a researcher to extract some of the mix of values that are shaping the behaviours of stakeholders and mostly how the school heads enact or practice their LFL from the stories they shared with me.

However, the school head should not dictate the school values but should consider other stakeholders' personal and professional values, and incorporate them to create a shared culture and an emotionally balanced school space (Hallinger, 2011). In the stories shared of leading learning, others stakeholders' values may emerge, as leadership is a shared phenomenon that should not only rest on one individual. The school head's role in the school includes the maintenance of key values, which may involve introducing or dropping certain values that impact positively or negatively on the existence of the school and the students' learning (Hallinger, 2011). A school head is also known as a values leader, meaning that he or she protects important values by sharing them in the school vision, culture and mission, and by making an effort to ensure that they are upheld by all stakeholders. In this study, the stories of the school heads were explored to see how the

school heads emphasise values, how they share values that they think are important, and how they protect existing values in various ways and introduce new values to complement the existing ones. The school head should align all the school stakeholders' values to the main existence of the school thereby creating a culture that is conducive to learning for all. Student learning should be at the heart of a school's values policy, which should promote learning outcomes and student growth.

2.4.1.2 Leadership focus

Leadership is believed to be highly influential in driving academic excellence in schools, and the concept of "leadership focus" refers to the various ways that the leadership of a school head influences and has an impact on wide school learning (Hallinger, 2011). The LLM views leadership as effective if the process is based on mutual influence that aims to respond to the current needs of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). This model highlights key relationships that are believed to exist between leadership and learning:

(1) School vision and goals

In empirical research conducted in the 1990s, school vision and goals were identified as the essential mechanisms through which leadership can impact learning (Hallinger, 2011). Various scholars, including Robinson et al. (2008), support the view that vision and goals are the most influential way in which heads of schools contribute to student learning. According to Hallinger (2011, p. 129), "vision refers to a broad picture of the direction in which the school seeks to move (educating the whole child)", whereas "goals refers to the specific targets that need to be achieved on the journey towards that vision". It is important for school heads to understand that their vision and goals can impact student learning in two ways: firstly, a successful school head uses vision and goals to promote collectivism and aligns stakeholders to work towards educating all school members; and secondly, a successful leader shares his/her vision and goals with all school members, as leadership involves more than just the school head, and is a collective effort that requires the contribution of everyone (Hallinger, 2011). The researcher aims to explicitly indicate the vision and goals of the Zimbabwean school heads who have

developed their schools into successful learning organisations with high academic achievement.

Visionary leaders are also seen as transformative, as they define goals that are essential in articulating a framework for programme adoption, resource allocation and decision making on staffing (Hallinger, 2011). Goals also help to clarify what a school will do and what it will not do. This was important in my study, as I was interested in how the vision and goals of the school heads influenced their actions and behaviours in leading learning, which saw their schools doing or not doing certain things in order to align with these goals. Earlier studies on effective school leadership identify "a clear academic vision and mission" as the most important element in schools as organisations (Hallinger, 2011). The school head should ensure that the school vision and goals focus on the learning of all school stakeholders, including organisational learning. The role of school heads in clearly defining a shared vision and goals that focus on learning remains key if successful academic achievement and improvement are to be attained. My study foregrounded the vision and goals of the Zimbabwean school heads in successfully leading learning.

(2) Academic structures and processes

The academic competence and abilities of any school are shaped and mediated by how the learning and leadership of the school relate to each other (Robinson et al., 2008). Effective leadership encourages academic structures that allow school members to have a direct impact on teaching and learning processes, that improve team work and cooperation among staff, and that minimise conflict to facilitate productive synergies (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 2010). Hallinger (2011) uses empirical evidence to advocate for changes in school heads leadership of the professional development of teachers as a key contributor to the learning achievements of students. The researcher took careful note of the organisational academic structures and processes that supported the learning of all stakeholders that were evident in the school heads shared narratives for this study. This included paying attention to how they executed their day-to-day LFL, focusing in particular on how they fostered collaboration, team work and communities of practice that benefited the learning of all stakeholders.

School heads should set up both formal (professional learning communities, departmental meetings and targets, and communities of practice) and informal structures (social gatherings and fund raising, parent meetings and consultation days) that encourage the collaboration of school stakeholders to improve student learning. In their "academic improvement capacity" school heads play a leading role in setting up and nurturing systems that foster school improvement and academic achievement (Hallinger, 2011). This highlights the importance of change, especially in the systems used to lead and manage schools (Fullan, 2001), as improvements in these systems can impact positively on learning processes, and hence on academic achievement (Oakes, 2005). Research on academic structures was deemed important for this study, as it provided insight into how Zimbabwean school heads' leadership directly and indirectly influenced students, stakeholders and organisational learning in relation to academic success.

(3) People

According to Hallinger (2011), capacity building is a broad concept that focuses on both the development of organisational members and the organisation itself. The late nineties saw a rise in research on organisational learning in relation to human capacity development (Hallinger, 2011). Fullan (2001, p. 21) affirms that "it has become increasingly clear that leadership at all levels of the system is the key lever for reform, especially leaders who focus on capacity building and develop other leaders who can carry on". School heads should learn to appreciate the diversity of knowledge and experience that different staff members bring to the different areas of the school, and should harness their potential for the benefit of the organisation through delegation and decentralised decision making in areas that require the staff members' expertise. Exploring the priorities of Zimbabwean school heads in relation to understanding, recognising and building the capacity of their staff members was deemed important for this study, in order to highlight their LFL priorities when it comes to human and organisational development, and whether they manage to support the learning of all stakeholders in order to improve academic achievement.

2.4.1.3 Context for leadership

Student learning outcomes and leadership cannot be fully understood in the absence of an understanding of the school context, as the effectiveness of any leadership is informed by external and internal contexts that both present opportunities or threats, and result in contingency or situational leadership (Hallinger, 2011). The school context is the environment in which school leaders operate, which is defined by the school organisational structure, the characteristics of the staff members, the power relations in operation, and the availability of resources (Hallinger, 2011). Since the context is not the same in each school, different leadership styles are necessary to deal with unique situations. Hallinger (2011, p. 135) identifies four stages of school improvement and approaches to LFL in the United Kingdom (UK): "(1) Coming out of special measures (turnaround phase); (2) Taking ownership; (3) Developing creativity; and (4) Everyone is a leader". Hallinger's analysis presents the possible behaviours leaders display for improving schools within multiple contexts in Europe, and my study did likewise for Africa, in particular for Zimbabwean secondary schools. Various leadership styles that the Zimbabwean school heads adopt in response to their context were identified in order to possibly inform the practices of other school heads in similar contexts.

2.4.1.4 Sources of leadership

Historically, leadership has always been debated, especially how and why leadership should be shared (Bass, 1990). As times change, notions of leadership also change. Hallinger (2011) notes that four decades ago, "how" school heads chose to "share leadership" was still as complex as it is today. According to Hallinger (2011), there are various ways in which school heads can share their leadership in schools: through strategies and behaviours that incorporate stakeholders in making decisions that affect their lives or work, through delegation, through consensus-based decision making, through input and through voting. Recently, shared leadership has been studied as distributed leadership and collaborative leadership (Crowther, Ferguson & Hann, 2008; Gronn, 2009; Murphy, 2005). Schools should broaden and increase their sources of leadership in order for more stakeholders to share power and leadership through being involved in decision making (Hallinger, 2011). In leading learning, school heads need to

promote shared leadership that develops teachers professionally. This study explores the various ways in which leading learning is shared by various stakeholders, and explores the various roles that help the school achieve their vision and mission.

2.5 THE STUDY FRAMEWORK: AN AMALGAMATION OF SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY AND HALLINGER'S (2011) MODEL

This study is guided by a theoretical framework that combines Tajfel and Turner's (1979) SIT and Hallinger's (2011) LLM, as shown in Figure 2.2. Hallinger's (2011) LLM incorporates SIT (constituted by the beliefs, values and experiences of the school head that affects his/her LFL), as shown on the left-hand side of the framework. This was confirmed by Dr Hallinger during a one-on-one meeting before a presentation at UKZN on 13 October 2016 in the School of Education Boardroom (see Appendix F for the school programme on the mentioned date). The identity of the school head is shown to be affected by the societal culture, institutional system, staff and community characteristics, and school organisation since he/she operates in these four environments. These environments also shape the school head's practices in leading learning, in accordance with the middle segment depicted on the model. This segment shows how the school head shares and articulates the vision and goals to the different school stakeholders, and how he/she views and leads the school academic processes and structures, including human capacity development. These practices are all affected by the identity the school head assumes in the four environments. Finally, student outcomes are determined by how the school head uses his or her identity in the four school environments — which influence the school's vision and goals, the academic structures and processes in the school, and the capacity of the people to lead and influence positive teaching and learning through LFL — and how that translates into high academic student achievement.

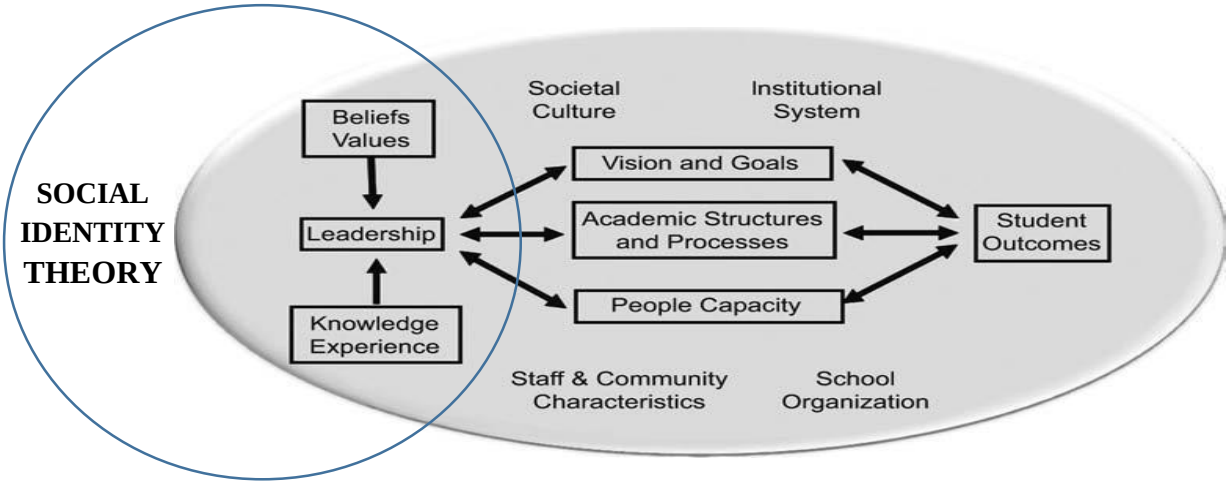


Figure 2.2 Theoretical framework

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed Tajfel and Turner's (1979) SIT and Hallinger's (2011) LLM, which were merged into a theoretical framework that served as a guide in generating and analysing data. SIT is used to address the first two research questions: "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?" and "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?" Hallinger's (2011) LLM addresses how school heads' meanings and understandings of LFL affect their choice of resources, their support, and their leadership practices, including their leadership style, in making learning possible in their schools. The next chapter outlines the research design and methodology, or the various ways in which data was generated and analysed in detail.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Tajfel and Turner's (1979) SIT and Hallinger's (2011) LLM, and how they were merged into a framework that underpinned my study, were discussed in the previous chapter. This research aims to understand the lived experience of Zimbabwean secondary schools heads as leaders for learning through the stories they tell. Merging SIT and Hallinger's LLM into one framework suited the narrative inquiry methodology, since according to Polkinghorne (1995, p. 5), "narrative is a type of discourse composition that draws together diverse events, happenings, and actions of human lives into a thematically unified goal-directed process".

I discuss my study design and the methodology that suits this research in three sections. Section A articulates the research paradigm, the research approach, and narrative inquiry as a methodology, including why it was chosen, how the participants were selected and my reasons for their selection. Section B focuses on the data generation methods that suited narrative inquiry and also answered my research questions, and includes a discussion of my role as a narrative inquirer working with the Zimbabwean school heads. Section C discusses the data analysis, the research ethics, and the trustworthiness of the study, including limitations that I encountered along the research journey. The reason for dividing the chapter into sections is to enhance the narrative flow of ideas and to group relevant areas of information that complement each other to best present the chapter.

3.2 SECTION A: RESEARCH PARADIGM

Prominent scholars such as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) and Creswell and Poth (2018) acknowledge that a paradigm like the interpretive is based on premises such as no single truths. Also ontologically there are multiple realities, and what we know about these truths and realities. Moreso, how we come to know the truths and realities (epistemology) is based on our interactions with individuals. As a researcher, I also believe that our lived experiences are unique, are shaped by the people we interact with

in various contexts, and later inform our future behaviours. Hence people's stories are worth listening to and worth studying subjectively because of the multiple interpretations by the storyteller and researcher that result in multiple truths and realities.

Scotland (2012, p. 12) states that "interpretive methods yield insight and understandings of behaviour that explain actions from the participant's perspective". As this study was a narrative inquiry, the interpretive paradigm was considered most appropriate, since I generated data through stories that I heard through from school heads, about their understandings and meanings of self in relation to how they lead learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Their stories and experiences of leading learning were socially constructed through our interaction, which situates my research within the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm was also chosen because it gave me the chance to use first-hand information from my participants in the form of their stories to understand the phenomenon (leading learning). It also allowed for the subjectivity of the school heads' stories, and did not seek objectivity, as humans experience the world differently (Cohen et al., 2011). Hence, my study captured individual school heads' experiences through the stories they told, including how they constructed and shared meanings of leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools as they interacted with the various school stakeholders.

3.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A plan of action for executing a research study is known as the research design, and it shows how one generates, analyses and interprets data to answer the research questions. It is the designed course of action that makes a study unique in comparison with other studies (Chiororo, 2014). This was a qualitative study that drew data from the stories shared by the school heads. In qualitative studies, real-life settings such as communities, schools and groups of people are used as research sites, with the aim of understanding human experiences and the meaning making they attach to such contexts (Punch, 2009). I studied the lived experiences of school heads in leading learning in the context of their schools and sometimes their homes as my research sites, where I physically spent considerable periods of time interacting with them. I made an effort to interpret leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools, especially the meanings and understandings

that the school heads expressed in the stories they shared with me of their day-to-day experiences as leaders of learning in their schools.

I selected a qualitative research approach as it offered me various methods to generate field data, some of which were oral and textual, such as the narrative interviews, and some of which included more tactile, visual-arts-based methods, such as artefact inquiry and collage inquiry. These methods were complemented by a transect walk, during which the stories of the school heads were gathered during a shared physical navigation of their school environment. The other rationale for using a qualitative approach was that it produced the thick descriptions and personal stories necessary to address my research questions, which were related to understanding the leadership and human experiences of the Zimbabwean school heads as leaders for learning (Patton, 2002). In short, a qualitative approach was chosen because it gave school heads a voice to share how they lead learning in Zimbabwean schools and key successful LFL practices that could help inform other heads of school across the globe.

According to Flick (2008), limitations of qualitative studies in the social sciences are the low degree of transferability of the findings and the problem of connecting findings to theory and to societal developments. These are interpreted as indicators of a disconnection in the social sciences between methods and findings (Flick, 2008). The above limitations do not limit this research significantly, since my aim was not to produce objective results but rather to understand, explain and interpret LFL in Zimbabwean secondary schools. This was achieved through acknowledging the multiple realities and meanings subjectively inherent in the stories shared of the experiences of the school heads as leaders for learning.

3.4 NARRATIVE INQUIRY AS A METHODOLOGY

At a meeting of a narrative inquiry research group with fellow students at the Assegay Hotel in Durban in early February 2016, we unpacked and explored the concept of narrative inquiry through the two poems below. The group consisted of twelve people, including my two supervisors, Professor Naicker and Professor Pillay, who facilitated the research cohort session. Two groups of five students were tasked with composing two

tweets[2] each of our understanding of narrative inquiry. Tweets may not consist of more than forty characters. As a group we then combined the tweets into a poem. The two poems below were the final products that both groups managed to come up with in a bid to summarise our understanding of narrative inquiry.

First poem

Lived experiences, told stories

Stories lived and told
An entanglement between
Lived experiences through stories
Stories of experience

Stories used as data
Relational and transactional
Experience of space, time and place
Capturing lived experiences

Second Poem

Lived stories and restories

Written by participants and researcher
An investigation into life experience
Deep understanding of information
We all live in a storied world

Stories and restories
Inquirer becoming part of the stories
Thick rich information
Lived experiences through stories

[2] According to Kwak, Lee, Park and Moon (2010, p. 1), "Twitter users tweet about any topic within the 140-character limit and follow others to receive their tweets".

The poem that aligns most closely with my understanding of narrative inquiry is the second poem titled "Lived stories and restories." I chose this poem because as human beings our lived experiences become stories that are later retold or restoried to different people in different contexts for a specific purpose. For example, historical stories that are passed on orally and textually have multiple understandings and interpretations created by the teller, the listener, the writer, the reader and the publisher. Below I further explain my chosen poem.

Lived stories and restories

Narrative inquiry is the methodology I adopted for this study. Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 20) state that "narrative inquiry is stories lived and told", which makes narrative inquiry a way of understanding experiences. I chose narrative inquiry because my interest was in the individual experiences of school heads in a specific context, rather than the experiences of a larger, more general group. It also gave me an opportunity to inquire about their lives as school heads, and in particular how they lead learning.

The recognition of the participants' voices in narrative inquiry makes it a unique method. Andrew (2012, p. 34) notes the following:

> Stories do not come out of nowhere, nor do they simply represent experience or an event as it actually happened. Rather they are always a representation of that, and as such are a very rich means for accessing inner truths, those ideas, beliefs and commitments which an individual holds dear.

Narrative inquiry allowed the use of the participants' exact words as evidence in exploring the meanings and understandings of self that the school heads derive from their experiences. In addition, narrative inquiry was able to amplify the voices of Zimbabwean school heads who have managed to lead their schools into academic success, to produce insights and knowledge that would otherwise remain unknown if it was not shared and documented (Trahar, 2013). Their stories were a primary means of providing sensible clues to successful LFL in Zimbabwean schools (Wang & Geale, 2015) that could help to inform practice and new knowledge in the field of educational leadership, management and policy (ELMP). Thus, this research used narrative inquiry to focus on how school

heads use reflection to tell, retell, and understand the stories of their lived experiences as heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools.

The National Council of Teachers of English (1992, p. 1) defines storytelling as "relating a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture". In this study I used storytelling to generate field texts, as it relied on both the listener (me as the researcher) and the teller (the school heads) utilising the social element of languages familiar to us (both Shona and English). This is in line with Nicolini's (1994, p. 58) observation that "we are by nature storytellers; therefore, it only makes sense to allow school heads a chance to first do something at which they are already good at". After generating the initial stories in the form of field texts, my duty as the listener and researcher was to tell the school heads' stories in the form of written research stories called narratives.

As part of the ethics of narrative inquiry and the politics of voice and representation, I had to go back to the school heads with a draft of my written narrative, which had a beginning, middle and end. This was to ensure that the important details of their lived experiences had been accurately included, as I had to take into account my own input as a researcher of LFL. This process is called member checking, and it is important for narrative inquiries. The researcher must be aware that the new story (narrative) is targeted at a wider audience. The narrative originates with the owners of the stories (the school heads) and is translated for another audience (in this case, fellow narrative inquirers, academics in different fields, other educational leaders and educational officials). The targeted audience needs to be able to relate to the characters, the context and the key lessons within the story, as the narrative serves as a means of passing on information from one generation to the next (Mello, 2001). The use of research stories in my study harnessed the importance of building on the synergistic relationship between languages, which was used in interactive ways by school heads to tell stories to improve LFL (Miller & Pennycuff, 2008).

One of the limitations of narrative inquiry is that it is time consuming and is therefore suited to smaller groups, and not large populations (Bell, 2002). For my research, only the stories of four Zimbabwean secondary school heads in one province and two districts were explored to understand their experiences of leading learning in their schools.

3.5 SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

3.5.1 Selection criteria

This research was conducted in Manicaland, a province in Zimbabwe, at four schools purposively selected based on their high academic achievement in public examinations. In this study, high academic achievement is defined as any result above 90% obtained by a school in the public Ordinary Level Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (OLZIMSEC) examinations held each year. A high academic achieving school was also defined as a school that had consistently ranked in the top ten with results of 90% and above for a five-year period (2014–2018) in the provincial list of the OLZIMSEC public examination results.

Purposive sampling was used to select four schools from Manicaland Province based on the above characteristics (Cohen et al., 2011). I chose purposive sampling because it allowed for a deliberate selection of school heads from the top four academic achieving schools in Manicaland Province, who were suitable for addressing my research questions. Non-probability and purposive sampling are used in qualitative studies to represent the wider population (Cohen et al., 2011).

Gender was also an important criterion in the selection of the participants, although I failed to achieve equal gender representation due to participants dropping out. Gender was considered an important criterion since I wanted to have a balanced, non-patriarchal gender perspective on leading learning in Zimbabwean schools. Initially I wanted to include six participants (three males and three females); however, I ended up including three males and one female.

Manicaland as a province was chosen for various reasons. Figure 3.1 shows a map of Zimbabwe that indicates the location of Manicaland Province. Manicaland Province was chosen for convenience, since I am from Chipinge District in that province. Convenience sampling is a “type of non-probability or non-random sampling in which members of the target population, are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility, or the willingness to volunteer” (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012, p. 788). The

reason for choosing schools in Manicaland Province was that they are easily accessibility by road, and were also easily accessible to me as a former student of one of the chosen schools. Lastly, I have a personal connection with the province. This is where I acquired my education as a student from pre-primary school to tertiary level.

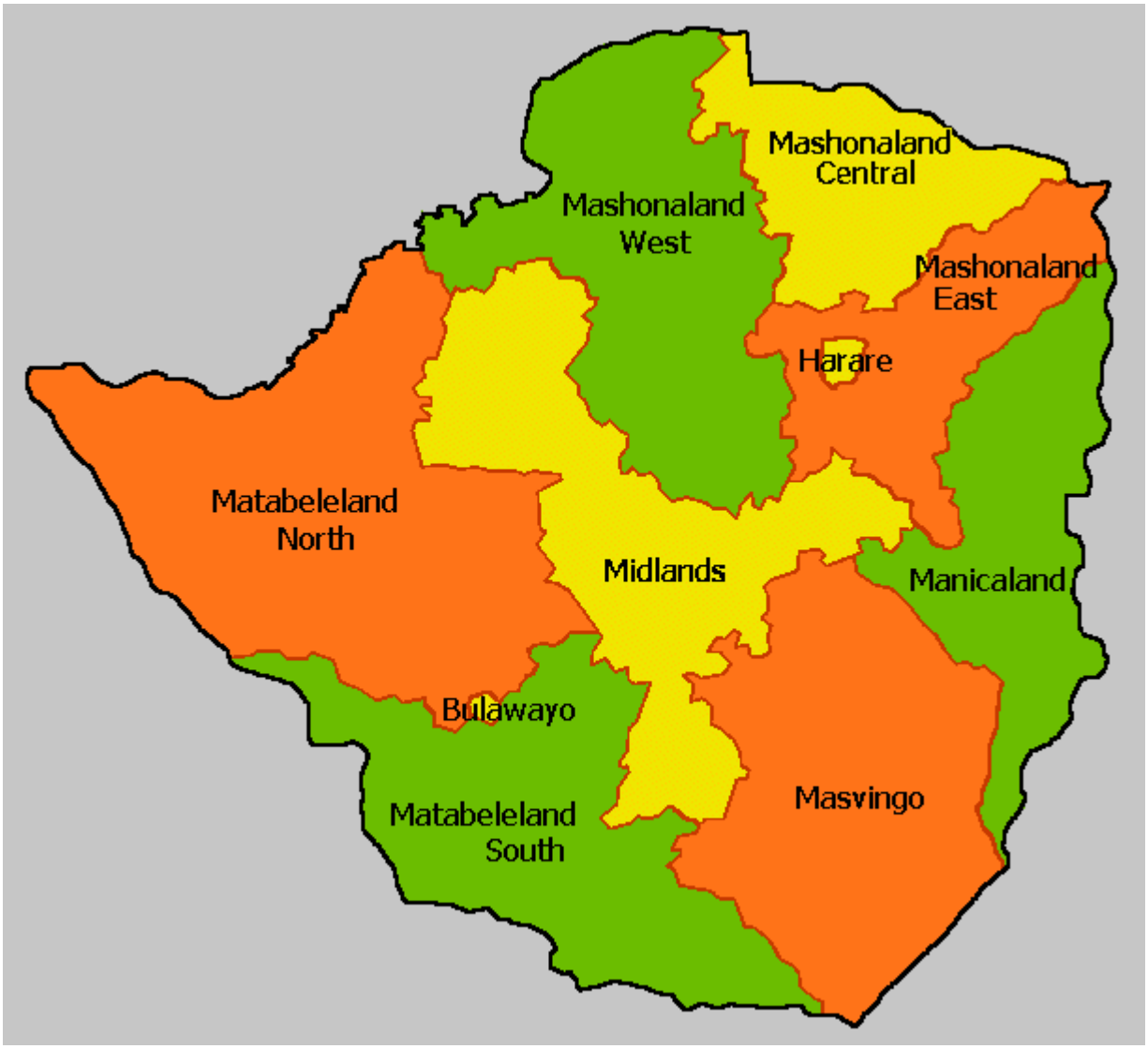


Figure 3.1 Zimbabwean map showing the provinces (Mavhu, 2014)

3.5.2 Profiles of the participants

The school heads are named using their personally chosen metaphorical pseudonyms: Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow. These pseudonyms were used in order to ensure the participants' anonymity. The profiles below provide a brief background on each participant, including their name, gender, age range, religious background and years of experience. This information helps to provide a sense of the identity of each participant in the data analysis chapters that follow.

3.5.2.1 Shining Star

Shining Star is an African male school head aged between 55 and 60 years. He is a Christian by religion, specifically a Roman Catholic. He has a teaching career that spans close to four decades. As a school head he has 27 years of experience. He assumed his first headship post in 1989, making him my most experienced participant. His chosen metaphorical pseudonym, Shining Star, sums up his personality as an individual and as a school head. He stated in his story: "Students and some of my staff always say, Sir you are a Shining Star; you bring light and direction to both learners and other staff. You are a role model, disciplinarian and advisor" (see Chapter 4, section 4.2).

3.5.2.2 Martyr

Martyr is a religious African woman. She has been an active Roman Catholic since her youth. Her age range is between 50 and 55 years. She is proud to have been teaching for more than two decades in the Catholic private school system. Martyr's teaching career began in 1992, and she has a significant 26 years of experience in the teaching field. She assumed her first headship position in 2005, and has over a decade of experience as a head of school. She is my second most experienced participant in this study. In describing herself metaphorically in a few words, she says: "I would say I am a Martyr. I stand for the truth and I would die for the truth" (see Chapter 4, section 4.3).

3.5.2.3 Chameleon

Chameleon is an African Christian male who is a member of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. He is the youngest of my participants, falling into the 40–45 years age range. He began his teaching career in 1998, and has two decades of experience in the teaching field. He assumed his first school headship position in 2010 after twelve years of teaching, making him the least experienced school head in the study with eight years of experience. In describing himself metaphorically, Chameleon says: "A chameleon suits my leadership style; it changes its colours so does my leadership style" (see Chapter 4, section 4.4).

3.5.2.4 Rainbow

Rainbow is an African male who loves his religion. He is an Anglican Church of the Province of Central Africa (ACPCA) member who is a Christian activist in and outside the school environment. His age range is 50–55 years. He qualified as a teacher in 1993, and hence has a vast teaching experience of two and a half decades. He assumed his first headship position in 2008, and has since accumulated ten years of headship experience. He is the third most experienced of my participants. Rainbow says: "I blend some laissez faire to a smaller extent, sometimes I am autocratic but mostly I am democratic involving others in decision making in matters affecting them or their working environment or conditions. I can say I am a Rainbow" (see Chapter 4, section 4.5).

3.6 SECTION B: DATA GENERATION

Data was generated through narrative interviews, which were supported by visual-arts-based methods such as artefact inquiry and collage inquiry, and were complemented by the transect walk. The narrative interviews were the primary form of data generation. I complemented the interviews with the artefact inquiry, collage inquiry and transect walk in three different data generation sessions that answered each of the three research questions respectively, as shown in Table 3.1 in section 3.6.4. Since there were three questions, one set of data generation sessions was devoted to each question.

The first set of sessions focused on the question, "Who are the heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?". Narrative interviews and artefact inquiries were conducted with each of the school heads both at home and at school, and focused on the life histories of the participants. The second set of sessions used narrative interviews and collage inquiry to answer the question, "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?" These sessions were conducted at each of the school heads' offices. The third set of sessions focused on the question, "How do school heads enact their practice as leaders of learning?" These sessions involved a transect walk with each of the school heads at their schools, and focused on areas that had contributed to their leading of learning.

Visual-arts-based research is seen as "any social research or human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology ... the arts may be used during data generation, analysis, interpretation and/or dissemination" (Rolling, 2010, pp. 1–2). In a more recent study, van der Vaart, van Hoven and Huigen (2018, p. 2) explain that "there are many dimensions to arts-based research, reflecting the large variety of art genres (such as performance, writing, painting, photography, collage and installation art) and these genres can be used in a variety of ways." In my study I used artefacts and collage that are explained in sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.3. It was important to generate data using various methods to capture the numerous aspects of the school heads' lives. The data generated helped me to examine and address the critical research questions that I set out to explore. I used a voice recorder to capture data during the interviews, and these voice recordings were transcribed so that my field texts captured the exact words of the participants. During analysis their meanings and understandings were reflected as accurately as possible without bias.

3.6.1 Narrative interviews

Narrative interviews, conducted through narrative inquiry, allow participants to share the stories of their lives without being interrupted or steered in particular directions, and by linking their socio-cultural context to their key life experiences. Narrative stems from the Latin word *narrare*, meaning "to share a story or report" (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000), and narrative interviews constitute a form of qualitative research (Flick, 1998; Lamnek,

1989). Narrative inquiry developed as a result of dissatisfaction with traditional ways of generating interview data, which generally involved asking recurrent questions using traditional interview techniques (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) note that allowing participants to narrate their stories without being interrupted produces quality data, as the researcher does not lead the participants to narrow their story according to what the researcher wants to hear. Also, Narrative inquiry also allows the use of different communication strategies by both the participant and the researcher, such as speech, gestures, listening and visual-art expressions (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000).

Narrative inquiry was used in my study as it offered school heads the freedom to share their perceptions of how they lead learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools without interruptions. This is best revealed in the stories or narration of their experiences and events as school heads. In this study I used narrative interviews to generate data on what it is to lead learning in a Zimbabwean secondary school. This data was generated from the stories expressed by the school heads, which narrated their biographical details, their cultures, their histories, and their formative experiences, including their journey to becoming school heads. These narratives expressed how their experiences may have had an impact on their LFL. I selected the narrative interview as a data collection strategy because it allowed the school heads to unpack their lived experiences in relation to the passage of time, taking into account their past, present and future experiences and aspirations. According to Muylaert, Sarubbi Jr, Gallo, Neto and Reis (2014), narrative inquiry helps to generate an understanding of potential shifts in people's values and beliefs as part of both their personal and professional growth, and this was deemed important for understanding how the school heads enact their leadership in schools.

Narrative inquiry therefore offers insight into people's life journeys over time — how people's experiences are informed by the past, how this helps to establish an understanding of their present, and how this enables possible predictions of their future (Muylaert et al., 2014). Narrative interviews helped me to understand the school heads better through their stories. They shared stories from their past, which were very important for developing an understanding of the present, both of which informed their vision for the future.

3.6.1.1 The narrative interview process

My behaviour was an important factor in the narrative interview process, as my interaction and relationship with the school heads was essential for making them comfortable enough to share their stories with me based on the trust developed between us (Campos, 2010). My narrative interviews involved four stages: an initiation, the narration, a questioning phase (probing), and a concluding discussion (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). I adhered to these stages because they offered guidance and orientated me for gathering deep stories of the experiences of leading learning in Zimbabwean schools. I therefore avoided the traditional interview method based on prior planned questions (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000), which enabled me to create an atmosphere that allowed my participants to freely share their stories about key events in their lives, both personal and professional. The four stages of the narrative interview process are discussed and explained further below. It is important to note that narrative inquiry is a complex process because it is non-linear, and it is possible for the four stages to come into play simultaneously as the interview takes place.

Initiation

Before interviewing the participants I explained the context of my research study and attempted to generally answer the first research question: "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" I also inquired about the school heads' chosen artefact that would help to describe who they are as individual leaders in Zimbabwean schools through the stories they tell. I sought the school heads' consent to voice record the interviews using a digital recorder and explained to them that the sole purpose of recording them was to ensure the accurate capture of their statements and to support a proper analysis later. I also explained to them the procedures involved in narrative inquiry, and let them know that they were free to share their stories without being interrupted. I explained that if I had questions I would jot them down and would ask follow-up questions once they had completed their narration (Muylaert et al., 2014).

In preparing the school heads for the narrative interview, I told them to tell me a story of "who" they are as individuals, or a story that summarises "who" they are as individuals. This had to include information that indicated their age range, their religion, and their

family background, including a description of their youth, their early leadership lessons and their educational journey. In a nutshell, I asked the participants to summarise their life journey from birth up to their present situation as a school head. This was done to present my research purpose and areas of interest to the school heads, and to indicate to them how I was going to try to understand who they are as individuals and what might have contributed to the way they lead today. I also explained that I was seeking a narration rich in detail (Muylaert et al., 2014). I made sure that I created a relaxed, stress-free atmosphere to encourage openness and honesty. I also explained that honesty is a critical part of ethical research, that their responses would be used solely to address my research questions, and that I would protect their identity through using pseudonyms in the write-up of my thesis and in any subsequent publications.

Narration

During this stage the school heads began telling their stories. After the narration had begun, I allowed it to flow to the end of the story and did not interrupt the school heads. I used gestures instead of words to acknowledge that I was following their story, and remained quiet in order to allow the free flow of their story, although I made written notes of interesting points or areas for probing or further enquiry (Muylaert et al., 2014). I made sure that the occasional notes I took for later questioning did not interfere with the narration. At the end of the narration I checked whether they had completed their narration by using statements such as “Is this all you want to tell me?” or “Is there anything else you want to say?” (Muylaert et al., 2014).

Probing

I only began to probe for further information at the end of the main narrative by asking questions on events or situations that were of interest to me as the researcher, focusing on what happened before and after (Muylaert et al., 2014). I raised aspects I had taken note of during the narration with the school heads to elicit further explanations or clarity, and asked questions about events in their stories that were both directly and indirectly related

to leading learning. This process generated fresh perspectives on their initial stories, and added to their main story (Muylaert et al., 2014).

Concluding discussions

A concluding discussion took place after the recorder had been switched off. Wrapping up the sessions involved general discussions about life, about my study and about my journey back to Durban, and included arrangements for the next steps and future continuation of the study. These discussions were of a more relaxed, informal and light-heated nature as opposed to the more formal accounts given during the narration (Muylaert et al., 2014). Here the school heads also took the time to thank me for recognising them and their schools, and especially for recognising the great job they are doing. They showed enthusiasm for our next meeting, and they also wished me well in my future endeavours and wished me a safe journey back to Durban. My former school head also appreciated me doing my Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), and suggested that the next time I visited I should deliver a motivational speech to the students.

Narrative interviews, as with any other research methods, do have some pitfalls. One pitfall is that since the researcher is not allowed to interrupt the participants, they may end up telling stories that possibly do not relate to the research context, which has led to certain people discrediting narrative inquiry as an approach (Muylaert et al., 2014). As a result, I was aware as a narrative interviewer that every school head would have possibly stated what they thought I wanted or was looking to hear from them. I attempted to overcome this limitation by being sensitive as a researcher and by acknowledging the fact that the stories that I obtained were to some degree strategic communication (Muylaert et al., 2014).

3.6.2 Artefact inquiry

Certain thoughts, ideas and memories can only be raised to the surface if they are stimulated to do so by the creativity of both the interviewer and the interviewee. This information is highly sought after, however, for understanding the complexities of the lives of the participants and for establishing deeper meanings and understandings. Visual-

arts-based methods are creative methods that may reveal the subconscious thoughts of participants and stimulate self-awareness during interviews (Hutchinson, Wilson & Wilson, 1994; Kvale, 1996). An artefact inquiry is a specific technique that I used to remind the school heads of different contexts, and it was especially useful for prompting new insights into who they were as individuals. In the first meeting with the participants I explained to them what an artefact is in the simplest form, and how it would help them to create something that would really capture who they are. I told them that their creation would have to express rich, significant memories and experiences of themselves as individuals. I shared with them a photograph of my former school bus and the memories it stimulated of my educational experience at a school that I think was led by a leader for learning (see Appendix A).

Artefacts can include photographs or memory box items such as policy documents and pictures, which are used in a narrative inquiry to trigger ideas and memories and to stimulate participants to tell their stories (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). According to Middleton and Edwards (1990), an artefact could be anything that we keep for the sake of memory, while Radley (1990) views artefacts as objects we collect over time that accrue cultural meaning or value. Hagan (2007) describes artefacts as human items that have significant meaning or that are representative of one's important interests, for example one's religion or culture. For example, to portray a culture of success, one of the participants, Chameleon, brought an artefact which was a prestigious Secretary's Bell (see section 4.4). It is an award for academic excellence given to the top academic achievers by the Zimbabwean Permanent Secretary for Education. This was a critical moment in his life, and the artefact stimulated memories of hard work and joy in his personal and professional life as a school head (Allender & Manke, 2004). The artefact ended up revealing a great deal about Chameleon.

In this study the artefact inquiry was used to complement the narrative interviews in order to gain a deeper understanding and obtain thick descriptions in the responses to the first research question: "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?" Artefact inquiry has unique advantages in generating data. In my study it gave the school heads the ability to describe who they are as individuals using a visual representation that carried significant memories of their lives (Hartel, 2014). Artefact inquiry also facilitated the building of trust between me and my participants, as I also shared my artefact with

them, which gave them a bit more information about my personal life and history, besides being a researcher (Douglas, Jordan, Lande & Bumbaco, 2015). The school heads' artefact helped them to open up about "who" they are and their beliefs, values, likes and dislikes. It is important to use a schedule of questions to guide participants to relate their chosen artefact to the research topic or phenomenon (Copeland & Agosto, 2012). Artefacts used in this study included trophies, photographs, drawings, a school logo and the Secretary's Bell, and the interview was guided by an artefact inquiry schedule.

One shortcoming of an artefact inquiry could be the need for better preparation on the part of the researcher, who needs to understand the method and employ particular skills, as opposed to generating data using traditional interviews (Douglas et al., 2015). In some instances the school heads spoke very little about their artefact, which would have made my analysis a bit more difficult as I would have had a smaller quantity of field texts to work with. To address this challenge I used my artefact inquiry schedule to probe for more information about the artefact. Of significant importance, however, was that the data generated through the artefact inquiry was useful for crystallising data. Viewing and understanding the field texts in numerous ways also helped me to capture the lives of the school heads during their various phases of life, and the artefact inquiry complemented the stories they shared (Sunstein & Chiseri-Strasser, 2007).

3.6.3 Collage inquiry

A collection of objects and pictures combined into a singular work of art is defined as a collage (Harrison, 2003). Van Schalkwyk (2010) defines a collage in the simplest form as a "glued" work. A collage inquiry was a visual-arts-based method I used to elicit rich data from my participants. The school heads had the opportunity to create a collage from a group of pictures that they selected which represented the sources from which they drew their LFL. The picture collage represented what and who inspired them to become leaders, and also their leadership styles and how they lead as school heads. The collage inquiry promoted the voices of my participants through stimulating their reflections on the pictures that they chose to include in the collages. Their reflections prompted multiple, diverse interpretations and understandings of their lived experiences as Zimbabwean school heads.

Collage inquiry was used to enrich and validate the information provided by the participants. In addition, integrating a visual-arts-based method like the collage into my study provided me with an opportunity for generating rich, high-level thinking ideas (Livingston, 2010), and also stimulated creative thinking on the part of the school heads about how they lead learning in Zimbabwean schools, as they had to represent their LFL in a single, visual artwork. This exercise also led them to reflect more deeply on how they lead learning in their schools (van Schalkwyk, 2010).

3.6.3.1 The collage making process

I set a meeting with the school heads a week before the making of the collage, in order to obtain their consent for the ongoing narrative inquiry process, which covered all the data generation activities up to the publishing of the findings. The purpose of the meeting was also to explain what a collage is, through sharing with them my own collage I had prepared of my learning experiences (see Figure 3.3). I also set a date and time for the collage activity, and asked the school heads to bring any other material they wished to include in the collage, since I was only going to provide them with magazines for pictures. Figure 3.2 below shows the instructions given to the participants for collage making.

Instructions for collage making

You are required to insert between 12 to 15 and not less or more pictures or images, including text cuttings from magazines and other sources. Use the provided A1 size chart to paste your chosen pictures, images and text cuttings. The end product (collage) becomes data that I will later analyse, hence I will make a copy for you and take the original with me after the interview. If original copies of your personal photos are used, please make colour copies and keep your originals so that you do not lose them when you hand over the collage to me. Due to limited space and number of pictures please choose the pictures carefully to include those that tell a story about the meanings and understanding of leadership you draw on as a school head, including the sources of your inspiration of your leadership, and the leadership practice and style you assume to date.

Figure 3.2 Instructions for collage making

Making a collage is a human activity that narrates one's story in pictures. In addition, it allowed me and the school heads to visualise LFL thoughts and practices that led to possible new understandings (Davis, 2008). Furthermore, this process gave the school heads a chance to think before sharing their experiences of leading learning, as their stories were informed by the chosen pictures. The end artwork represented a framework from which each school head constructed their meanings and understandings of leading learning that could have remained unvoiced or hidden to both themselves and me as the researcher if the activity had not been conducted (Butler-Kisber, 2008; Davis & Butler-Kisber, 1999). After the process one of the school heads said the following:

> This has been a very exciting activity in the sense that it actually made me to think of what I wanted to say and how I wanted to portray myself and how I have experienced my life as an individual, teacher and leader reviewing myself, my leadership style in pictures and words.

A possible limitation of collage inquiry is the ambiguity of visual images and the possibility of multiple interpretations (Banks, 2009). This limitation was overcome through using a collage inquiry schedule that contained follow-up questions to probe the responses of the school heads and encourage them to share their stories behind the

inclusion of the pictures in the collage. Another limitation of collage inquiry often experienced by participants is not having enough time or materials to develop one's intended idea sufficiently (van Schalkwyk, 2010). This potential limitation was overcame by using the first meeting with the school heads to give them a clear idea of what the collage would be about, so that they could bring with them specific pictures that accurately portrayed their intended meanings and their understanding of the leadership sources that they draw on.

Figure 3.3 The researcher's schooling experience

3.6.4 Transect walk

A transect walk is a geographical method that was originally used to study soils, and that recognises the importance of the research environment, in particular information generated for a specific area or field chosen to capture soil samples to determine soil classifications (Birmingham, 1998). Because it values the localised context of knowledge, it is a method that I adopted as part of the narrative inquiry, as it is an active, participatory method of participants and researchers generating stories and information together (Oudwater & Martin, 2003). This method generated data through the visual observation of the participants' school environments as they related to the participants' LFL practices. The observations prompted discussions with the school heads to identify key areas or structures within the school environment that influenced their LFL in the schools (Oudwater & Martin, 2003).

The transect walk in this study was an observational method of data generation, where I walked around the school with the school head to trigger stories related to the research questions. The school transect walks involved reviewing the infrastructure of the school and making observations on the surrounding areas. This process helped the school heads, as what they were seeing as we walked triggered stories related to leading learning. The school heads conducted both a physical and an abstract transect walk. The physical transect walk required them to choose five important places within the school environment as we walked around, and to explain and highlight their importance to them as leaders of learning, and their importance to the school in terms of how the places met the school's sole purpose of promoting learning for all, and in particular for the students. The abstract transect walk required the school heads to choose five places where they had once lived that had memories or experiences that informed their leadership practices, as well as any personal or professional aspects of those places that contributed to their LFL.

The above process was guided by a transect walk schedule, and consent was sought from the school heads to voice record the conversation as we walked around the school. To help the participants to gain more confidence and be more at ease with this method of data generation, I shared my own transect walk of my learning experiences with them, which gave them a clear idea of what to expect before their actual transect walk. I also emailed them the transect walk schedule so that they could carefully consider in advance their choice of places that would take me through their stories. This method gave the

school heads an opportunity to identify the pillars of their leadership, including the resources and facilities they use to support learning. Each school head also had to identify certain policies or practice that he/she implements on an everyday basis for his/her LFL to be successful and effective, and to produce good academic achievements.

Table 3.1 Data generation schedule showing the data instruments and the three data generation sessions

S/N	Research Question	Method/s	Context	Participants	Data Sources	Purpose
1	Who are the heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?	Narrative interview and artefacts	The interviews were conducted both at home and school.	The school heads	Life history of the participant including artefacts to support his/her journey of becoming a leader for learning in education. These helped to establish their life history, especially how they grew up, what they were inspired to do, who inspired them and what motivated them to become who they are today.	To know the participant (what is a school head in the Zimbabwean context) and what they have gone through to get to their current position. To gain insight on what defines school heads in Zimbabwe and what their personal and professional educational journey in becoming leaders for learning was like.
2	What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?	Narrative interview and collage	The school heads' office	The school heads	The interview, in conjunction with the collage, helped the school heads to include sources that they draw their LFL from.	To establish the participants' meaning and understanding of LFL and what has inspired them to lead learning since they were born and up to the present. Also to identify their leadership style and how they lead learning in their school.
3	How do school heads enact their practice as leaders of learning?	Narrative interview and transect walk	At the school, especially walking around areas that have contributed to their leading of learning. I asked the school heads to choose five strategic places that support or facilitate their LFL in their schools.	The school heads	The interview worked hand in hand with the transect walk to identify things that shape their day-to-day LFL. The transect walk helped the participants to identify things that have improved their LFL, especially practices that have led to improved academic excellence.	To identify what the school heads use as resources to support LFL in their schools. Also to identify certain policies or practices that they implement every day for their LFL to be successful and effective, and to produce good academic achievements.

3.6.5 Role of the researcher as a narrative inquirer working with school heads in Zimbabwe

My attributes and role as a researcher are central to this narrative inquiry. I selected four school heads to share with me their experiences or life stories on how they lead learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools. As a narrative inquirer, most of my time in the field was spent with the school heads as I gathered their stories through multiple methods of data generation to produce information called field texts. Field texts are the data generated by the narrative researcher from the participants, for example the transcribed story shared by the school heads (Clandinin, Connelly & Chan, 2002). Before I generated information from the school heads, I started by forming a friendly bond based on mutual trust and respect. On the day that we met for the first time, after introducing myself and what my study entailed, I also shared with them my learning experiences as a PhD student so that they could have a better understanding of me as individual. This was done in order for the school heads to trust me and to feel more comfortable, relaxed and open when sharing their stories with me later, since they would also know a bit of my background.

Narrative research obliged me to work closely with the school heads through continuously collaborating with them, negotiating our relationships for smooth transitions, and providing various ways of being useful to them (Trahar, 2009). I attempted to capture the school heads' indigenous meanings of real-world experiences of leading learning from an emic perspective, by participating in data generated through, for example, collage inquiry and transect walks as a co-participant (Yin, 2010). The purpose of this was to look at things through the eyes of school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools (Willis, 2007). However, a major concern of narrative inquiry is certain ethical issues that may pose some difficulties for the researcher. Peshkin (1988) describes subjectivity as a "garment that cannot be removed"; thus, I was careful about not imposing meaning on the participants' lived experiences, through employing careful debriefing and member checking — a process where participants had to read the narratives I transcribed and wrote, and confirm if I had presented their ideas without bias and respectfully, as recommended by Clandinin and Huber (2010, p. 15).

My other crucial role as a narrative inquirer was to acknowledge that as an outsider to leading learning in Zimbabwean schools, my emic perspective could not objectively present their own meanings and understandings as school heads through being a co-

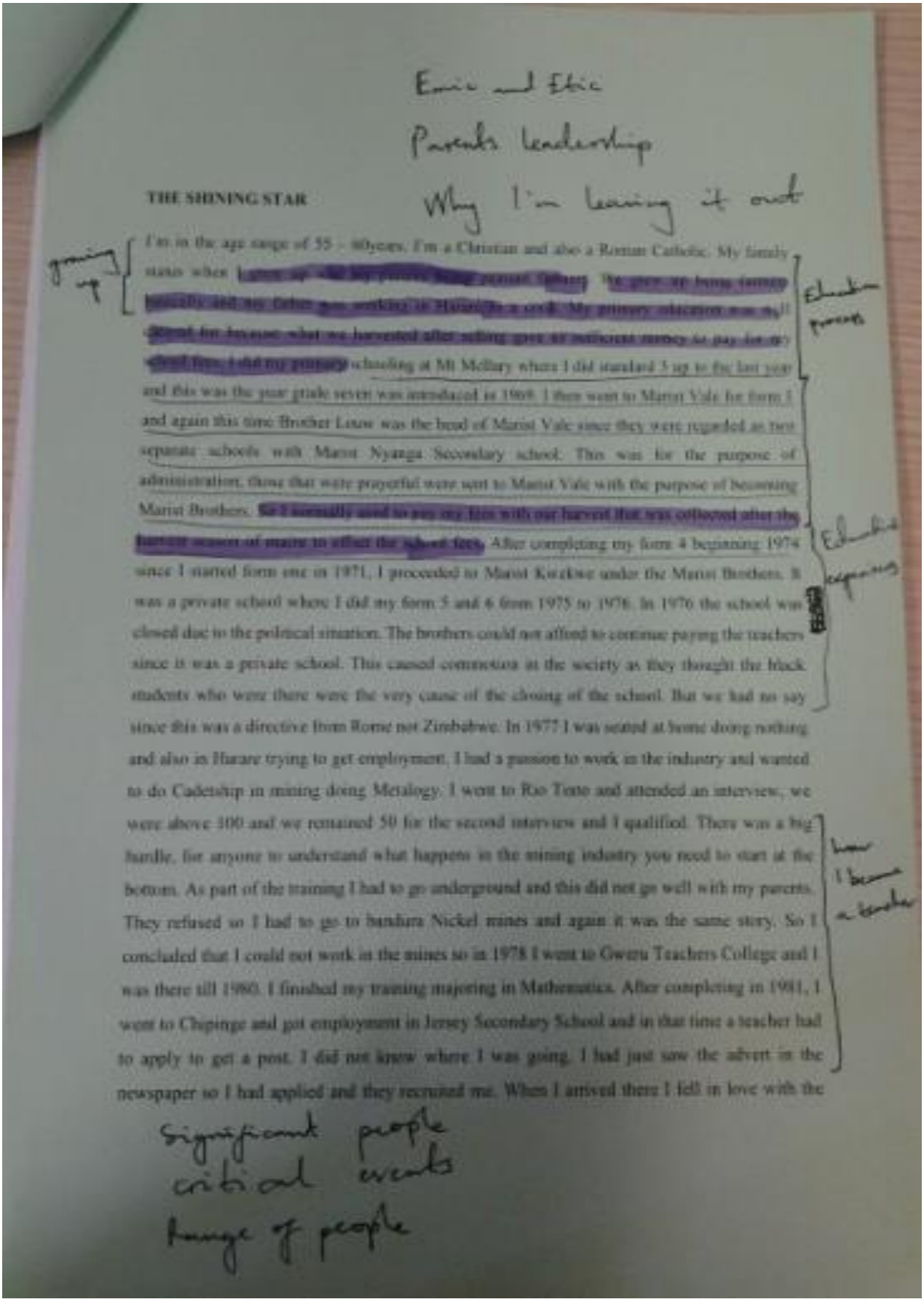
participant. In attempting to capture the reality, (the meanings and understandings of the school heads as leaders for learning in Zimbabwe), I had to also include an etic approach in my study, and so I used a range of previous research findings on leadership to assist my understanding of the lived experiences of the school heads as leaders for learning (Olive, 2014). The field texts that were generated were analysed in three different ways according to the research questions, producing three data analysis chapters (chapters four, five and six). These chapters addressed the purpose of my research, which was to explore and interpret the understandings and meanings of the school heads in terms of how they lead learning in their schools.

3.7 SECTION C: DATA ANALYSIS

The chosen data generation methods — narrative interviews, visual-arts-based methods (collage inquiry and artefact inquiry) and transect walks — generated a large amount of data that was potentially overwhelming. As a novice researcher using narrative inquiry, I did not know exactly how to go about it in terms of selecting what to use and what to leave out. Through engagement with my supervisors and other critical friends who were also PhD students working with narrative inquiry, I decided to analyse my data using two methods: "narrative analysis" and "analysis of narratives". Narrative analysis is "the studying of data consisting of actions, events and happenings whose analysis produces stories (biographies, histories, case studies)" whereas, analysis of narratives is "the studying of data consisting of narratives or stories whose analysis produces paradigmatic typologies or categories" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). The orally generated stories were transformed into research texts through transcription, and the texts were subjected to narrative analysis as the first data analysis procedure. After this, the research narratives were further analysed according to "analysis of narratives", bringing forth common categories that were developed into themes that summed up each school head's story thematically.

3.7.1 Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis focuses on how a person's life chronology produces his or her present state, by examining the person's experience. In this study, the primary narrative analysis tool I used was emplotment, that is, organising events and actions into a simple story by means of a plot and narrative configuration (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative emplotment attempts to capture small stories that make up the larger stories by carefully organising them chronologically to produce a coherent narrative for each participant (Polkinghorne, 1995). Using Mitchell, De Lange and Moletsane's (2011) storyboard technique, I generated descriptions of events and turned them into a story. This technique is borrowed from the film industry, and it offered me the chance to work in a unique manner with the school heads' stories. This method allowed me to plan, organise, write and arrange the series of events my participants shared with me (field texts) to create a complete story for each participant. The stories of the school heads are subjective accounts of the way they lead learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools. This first level of analysis was to answer my first research question: "Who are the heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" Figure 3.4 below shows how I coded the field texts (Picture 1) of one participant, Shining Star, and then used colours to group data that related to specific categories (Picture 2). I then developed the themes that I included in my storyboard (Picture 3), which were supported by images clearly showing the connection between the images and words (Picture 4) in the narrative I presented of each participant.



Emic and Etic

Parents leadership

Why I'm leaving it out

THE SHINING STAR

growing up

I'm in the age range of 55 – 60years. I'm a Christian and also a Roman Catholic. My family status when I grew up was [illegible] parent. Though he grew up being raised by his aunt and her father was working in Harare as a cook. My primary education was all [illegible] because what we harvested after selling gave us sufficient money to pay for my school fees. I did my primary schooling at Mt Mellary where I did standard 5 up to the last year and this was the year grade seven was introduced in 1969. I then went to Marist Vale for form 1 and again this time Brother Louw was the head of Marist Vale since they were regarded as two separate schools with Marist Nyanga Secondary school. This was for the purpose of administration, those that were prayerful were sent to Marist Vale with the purpose of becoming Marist Brothers. So I normally used to pay my fees with our harvest that was collected after the harvest season of maize to offset the school fees. After completing my form 4 beginning 1974 since I started form one in 1971, I proceeded to Marist Kwekwe under the Marist Brothers. It was a private school where I did my form 5 and 6 from 1975 to 1976. In 1976 the school was closed due to the political situation. The brothers could not afford to continue paying the teachers since it was a private school. This caused commotion in the society as they thought the black students who were there were the very cause of the closing of the school. But we had no say since this was a directive from Rome not Zimbabwe. In 1977 I was seated at home doing nothing and also in Harare trying to get employment. I had a passion to work in the industry and wanted to do Cadetship in mining doing Metalogy. I went to Rio Tinto and attended an interview, we were above 300 and we remained 50 for the second interview and I qualified. There was a big hurdle, for anyone to understand what happens in the mining industry you need to start at the bottom. As part of the training I had to go underground and this did not go well with my parents. They refused so I had to go to Sandura Nickel mines and again it was the same story. So I concluded that I could not work in the mines so in 1978 I went to Gweru Teachers College and I was there till 1980. I finished my training majoring in Mathematics. After completing in 1981, I went to Chipinge and got employment in Jersey Secondary School and in that time a teacher had to apply to get a post. I did not know where I was going. I had just saw the advert in the newspaper so I had applied and they recruited me. When I arrived there I fell in love with the

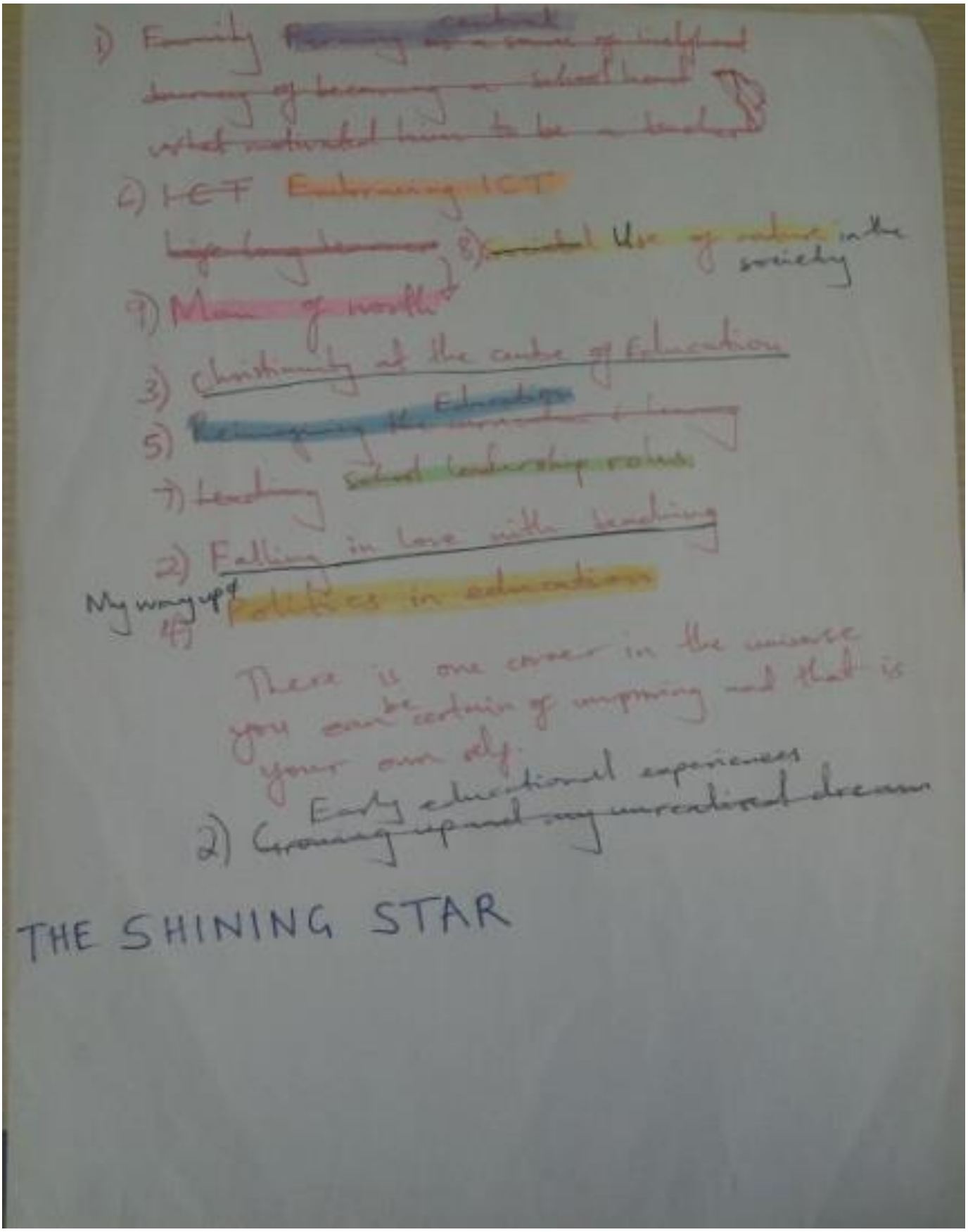
Ethic parents

Ethic experience

how I became a teacher

Significant people
critical events
Range of people

Picture 1


1) Family
4) HET Embracing ICT
8) Use of culture in the society
7) Means of worship
3) Christianity at the centre of Education
5) Education
7) Leading
2) Falling in love with teaching
My way up
4) Politics in education
There is one career in the universe you can be certain of inspiring and that is your own self.
2) Early educational experiences
THE SHINING STAR

Picture 2

Picture 3

I took care of the family at an early age

My name is Shining Star and this is my story.

I am a Zimbabwean man born in the year 1956 in a religious family of six children. I am the first-born child in a Christian family although most of the other families in the rural areas of Zimbabwe practiced African Tradition. The Roman Catholic missionaries settled in our area around 1935 with an aim of establishing a church, school and hospital to benefit our community. My parents were some of their first converted members whom they baptised in their early years of establishment. I grew up in Nyatate, a rural area in Nyanga District. It was a drought-stricken area although most families including mine survived on peasant farming and cattle rearing as these were feasible. During the holidays, I used to work in our fields and rear the cattle as part of our chores. However, most of the man to support their families better, used to migrate and work in big cities. This meant fathers and husbands would spend little time with their families usually on their leave days or special holidays such as Christmas time. I barely knew my father as he was mostly absent working as a Chef in the Capital city Harare which was called Salisbury back then. In the absence of my father, I assumed his role as the head of the family at an early age assisting my mother in the fields before going to primary school. I also took care of my younger siblings showering them with love, making them toys, teaching them acceptable behaviours and manners. I also made decisions on behalf of the family where possible lessening the parenting burden on my mother. My primary and secondary education was funded by the money we got after selling our yearly harvest, which was sufficient to pay for my school fees.

A young leader in the making during my early educational life

The establishment of schools by missionaries in our rural community was a blessing. I attained both my primary and secondary education in the Roman Catholic mission schools. I did my primary schooling at Mt Mellary, a Roman Catholic missionary school beginning in 1963 where I did my standard 1 and in 1969 was doing my standard 7. In 1970 the standards education system was replaced by the grade system. At primary, I used to lead my group during reading time. Since English was not our home language most students were afraid to read out loud in class. However this was not the case with me, I was always willing to go first and I enjoyed the challenge and the praises I got after my attempt from our English teacher Mr Simango. I even still remember him to date although he is late. In 1971, I joined Marist

Picture 4

3.7.2 Analysis of narrative

After all the experiences had been constructed, using the storyboard technique, into a coherent "movie" narrative made up of logical scenes, the new story or narrative became ready for the second part of the analysis, which was the analysis of narratives. This was a process that uses stories as 'data' and uses 'analysis' to arrive at themes that are applicable across the school heads' stories, producing storylines that capture common lived experiences. However, the unique story lines of each participant were also considered. I allowed participant checking or respondent validation, as emphasised by Cohen et al. (2011), to offer the school heads the opportunity to add further information to their written narratives, which improved the trustworthiness of my study through enhancing the credibility of the data. Analysis of narrative is a "process that seeks to locate common themes or conceptual manifestations among the stories generated" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 13). Accordingly, the school heads' narratives were used as data, which included character, setting and the plot, to capture the meanings and understandings of school heads, including key choices and events in their lives that were analysed through paradigmatic processes using thematic analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995).

I used inductive analysis to identify themes in the narratives of the school heads to address my second research question: "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?" Inductive analysis was key, because categories, themes and patterns emerged from the school heads' narratives, rather than me imposing them before carefully analysing the narratives (Patton, 2002). Below is how I analysed my second research question. I firstly identified key words in the research question that helped me to identify a suitable analytical framework. I chose Rodgers and Scott (2008) that was also complimented by Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) to present themes and subthemes that portray the meanings and understandings that inform the identities the school heads in the community or at work. This is further explained in the next subheading. Using inductive analysis, I identified developing categories that I summarised as themes relating to the school heads' identities, which I classified personally and professionally from the school heads' stories (Chikoko, 2015). Finally I had to weave both the personal and professional identities of self of each head to explain the emerging school head identity. The above was done by using a pantoum poem that synthesised the personal and professional identity of each participant. This process is

further explained in Chapter Five, where I present a full analysis of the second research question.

I also used the same process described above to address the third and final research question: "How do school heads enact their practice as leaders of learning?" The process involved a further analysis of the school heads' meanings and understandings of self (personal and professional) which made up their school head identity, and how these influenced their LFL practices. The inductive analysis process led to the emergence of common and unique themes, as the participants had different lived experiences, and hence some common and some unique LFL practices in leading learning. The process is further elaborated in Chapter Six. Below is a picture of me in action, doing the messy work of analysing my research questions according to the analytical frameworks, in order to present the results to my supervisors and fellow PhD candidates.

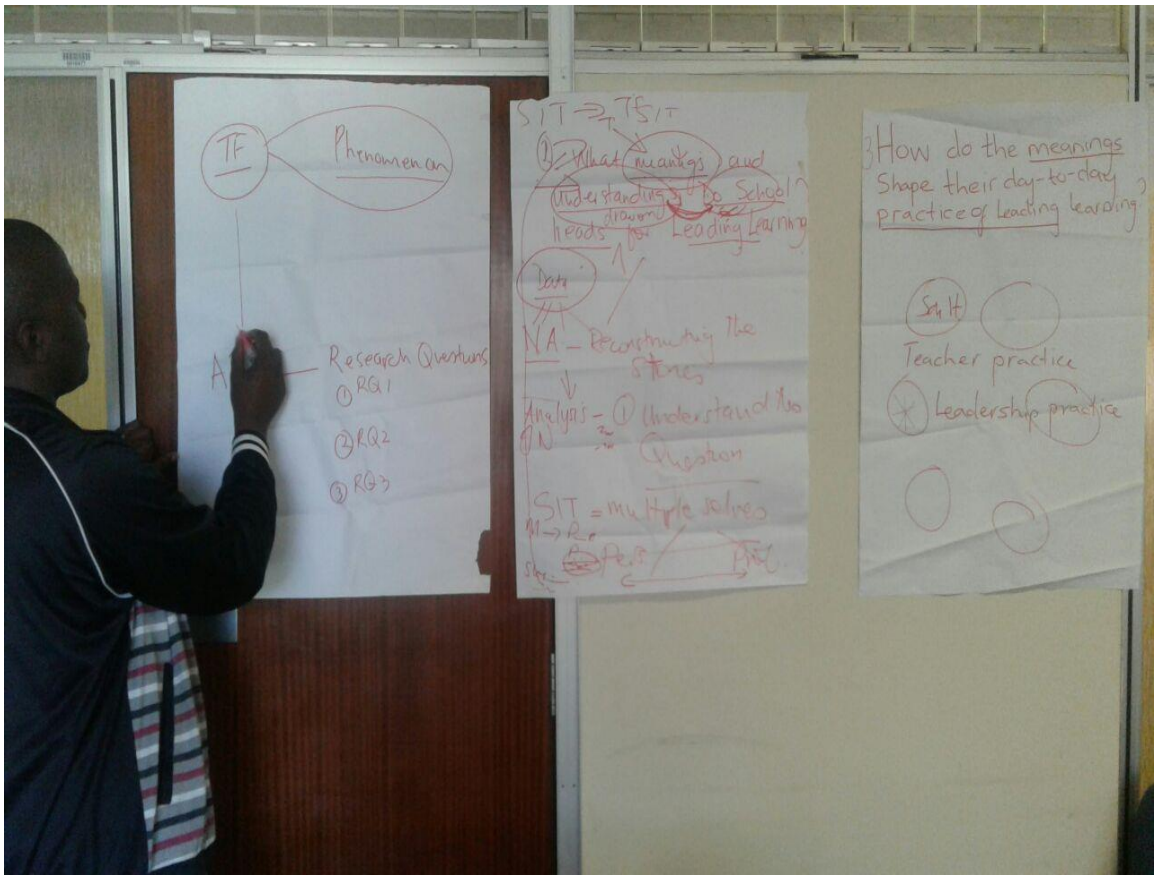


Figure 3.5 Data analysis of my research questions according to the analytical frameworks

3.7.3 Analytical frameworks for analysing data

An analytical framework provides a guide for researchers to follow in order to code data into categories in the process of analysis (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid & Redwood, 2013). Such a framework "creates a new structure for the data (rather than the full original accounts given by participants) that is helpful to summarise/reduce the data in a way that can support answering the research questions" (Gale et al., 2013, p. 1). Addressing the second research question involved using Rodgers and Scott's (2008) concept of identity as the analytical framework, in conjunction with Beauchamp and Thomas (2011). Addressing the third research question used an inductive process to make sense of emerging common and unique themes of LFL practices of Zimbabwean school heads, and no analytical framework was utilised.

Identity comprises four basic assumptions depicted in the below diagram: "contextual, relational and emotional, shifting and multiple, and storied" (Rodgers & Scott, 2008, p. 733). Each assumption is further explained, including how it assisted in analysing and answering my second research question: "What meanings and understandings do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?"

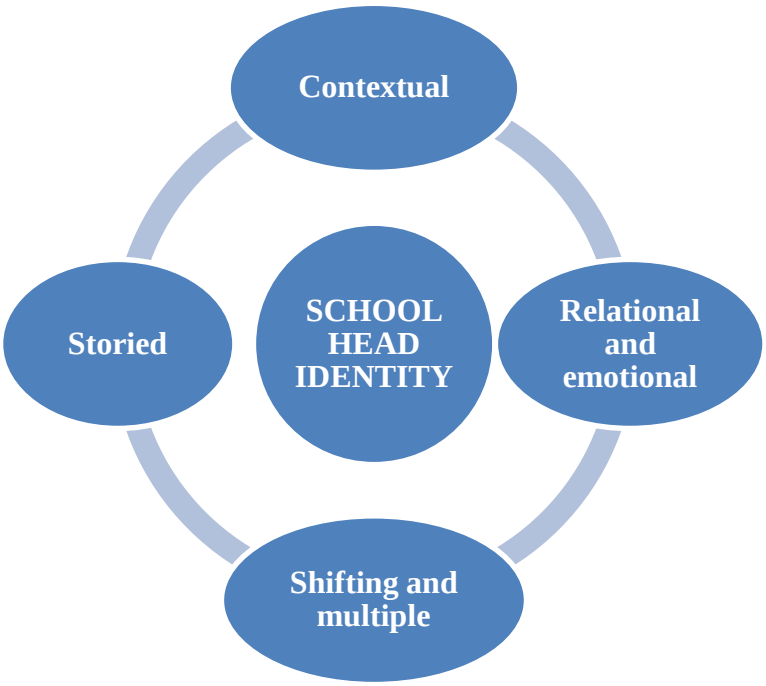


Figure 3.6 Model adopted from Rodgers and Scott (2008)

3.7.3.1 Identity as contextual

Teachers' identities are reliant upon and are shaped by four key contexts during their formation: historical, cultural, social and political (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Personal identity is produced by the contexts in which individuals find themselves: family, study groups, schools, political groups, religious groups, and teacher education programmes (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Identity formation is dependent on interactions with people in our midst or with the environment itself (Sutherland, Howard & Markauskaite, 2010, p. 456). In scanning through the participants' stories, I identified certain key ideas that were influential in the identity formation of the school heads, such as family, religious affiliation or groups, or experiences at school and in college that inevitably shaped their notions of who they perceived themselves to be and how others perceived them (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Who individuals are, including teachers, is shaped by their experiences in the abovementioned contexts, which directly influence identity formation.

3.7.3.2 Identity as relational and emotional

Identity formation is a human activity that develops within groups and relationships with others. This makes it an emotional activity that occurs within numerous contexts and within numerous relationships with different people and social groups, leading to the emergence of multiple selves (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Emotions and feelings are key in social relationships and are critical in identity formation (Hargreaves, 2001; Winograd, 2003; Zembylas, 2002, 2003). In addition, "emotions may alter a teacher's identity in relation to the profession, but may also be altered by aspects of the personal" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 180). With the above in mind, I tried to identify key relationships that my participants had with family members, colleagues at work, and community members, and also the emotions involved in these relationships, which influenced how they determined and negotiated their identities, both personally and professionally.

3.7.3.3 Identity as shifting and multiple

Various factors, such as relationships and environment, whether social or professional, produce shifting, unstable and multiple identities in individuals (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Gee (2001, p. 99) notes that "The 'kind of person' one is recognised as 'being' at a given time and place can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and of course, can be ambiguous or unstable". In addition, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) summarise identity as always answering the question, "Who am I at this moment?" This means that identity is continuously under construction and that people assume different identities depending on their roles, relationships and environments, producing multiple, shifting identities. In their narratives the school heads assumed a range of different identities that varied from parent, student, leader in the classroom, and role model to student, colleague, counsellor and assessor.

3.7.3.4 Identity as storied

Teachers' identities are constantly being constructed and reconstructed according to shifting meanings and understandings, as they gather life experience and tell their stories over time, which enable them to make sense of their identity formation and development (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Identity formation is an everlasting process from birth till death and is captured by our lived experiences. Clandinin et al. (2002) assert that teachers' identities are a unique reflection of their stories or lived experiences, which are influenced by their past and present, including their professional and personal lives. This encouraged me to be aware that the school heads' identities were embedded in the stories they told me of themselves. I also noted that their identity formation had been an ongoing process since birth, and that their identities had changed over time, according to the complexities of various contexts and relationships. In analysing my research texts I took note of how the teachers' identities informed the "characters" in the stories they told, which also shifted in the narration, as did the implications for their LFL practices personally and professionally.

As indicated above, I also used Beauchamp and Thomas's (2011) understanding of teacher identity to complement Rodgers and Scott (2008). Beauchamp and Thomas (2011) understand teacher identity as fluid and as continuously shaped by the personal and professional lives of the individuals. I used both identity theories to understand how teachers' identities are informed by both their personal and professional lives, and how they are dependent on context.

3.8 RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

In a narrative inquiry, and in qualitative studies in general, establishing trustworthiness is an important part of ensuring rigour in the research, as opposed to the importance of reliability and validity in quantitative studies (Golafshani, 2003). Trustworthiness is demonstrated through ensuring the "credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the study" (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011, p. 99).

Credibility is a measure of how well the original ideas or views presented by the participants were captured or represented in the researcher analysis and argument (Schwandt, 2007). In a credible study, the researcher's description of the participants' stories should match the participants' narratives (Janesick, 2000). In other words, to establish credibility, one asks how credible one could consider the narrative written by the researcher on behalf of the participants to be. Credibility was ensured through various means, such as a peer debriefing of the participants, member checks with the school heads, and detailed recording of the events and processes of narrative inquiry, so that they could be audited if necessary (Lincoln, 1995). In the process of member checking I submitted my narratives to the school heads for them to judge whether their stories had been captured in a way that they were comfortable with, before I published them in my thesis. This included giving them a chance to retract any statements that they no longer wanted me to use. It was a useful exercise, as one of the participants withdrew some of the people's names he had mentioned in relation to a scenario that could have negative implications for these people.

Transferability involves a judgement by other readers and researchers on the extent to which the research context of the study resembles and could apply to their research context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, transferability relates to whether a study

can be generalised to other research contexts or not. However, in a qualitative inquiry there is "no single correct or 'true' interpretation" when it comes to dealing with human interactions in their various contexts (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Furthermore, Donmoyer (1990) indicates that generalisability does not apply in qualitative studies, because they are subjective and express individual meanings and understandings. Nevertheless, the researcher tried to ensure transferability or generalisability through acknowledging multiple realities.

To strengthen the dependability of this study, I ensured that my research procedures were auditable. I made sure they were as clear as possible, and that every detail was well documented so that any researcher could easily follow the steps I did to conduct a similar study (Schwandt, 2007). The above is called an audit trail, which is a detailed account of how the study was conducted, presented in a logical and traceable manner. Tobin and Begley (2004) assert that the rigour and dependability of qualitative research involves demonstrating a logical understanding of how the research was conducted, including the chosen methods and, most importantly, the need for the research. In this chapter I have outlined clearly how each method was used to generate field texts, leaving an audit trail that any narrative inquirer could follow in another context and to work with to produce field texts.

Richardson (2000) offers "crystallisation" as a term to be used in qualitative studies to replace triangulation (Janesick, 2000). The idea of crystallisation recognises the multiple interpretations our world can offer (Richardson, 2000), and this is the same idea I maintained in my study as a narrative inquirer. In the crystallisation process (Richardson, 2000) I gathered the stories of the school heads using different methods that also yielded the different perspectives of the school heads on the same narratives on LFL. The different perspectives of the shared stories contributed to an understanding of different questions during the analysis phase. Crystallisation deepened my understanding of how the Zimbabwean school heads lead learning and also the multiplicity of their constructed realities that are both personal and professional (Seale, 1999).

Another key contributor to my rigour of the study was an academic conference I attended titled "International Research Symposium and Exhibition", held from 3–5 February 2016, in the Tugela Room of the Maharani Tower at the Maharani Hotel in Durban. The theme of the conference was "Not just an object: Making meaning of and from everyday objects

in educational research" and the keynote speakers were Professor Claudia Mitchell from McGill University in Canada and Professor Kate Pahl from Sheffield University in the UK. At the conference, I was acquainted with objects and Figure 3.7 shows a picture of me with my presentation that I presented to an international academic audience, who critiqued my ideas. I later wrote on the picture of my former school bus as part of a book chapter that was published after the symposium. The co-written chapter was titled "From a crutch to a bus: Learning about educational leadership research and practice through referencing and mapping of objects" (Naicker, Blose, Chiororo, Khan & Naicker, 2017) (see Appendix A).

Figure 3.7 Presentation at the Durban International Research Symposium and Exhibition (2016)

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ehtics are key in any research that involves animals and human beings as subjects (Christiansen, Bertram & Land, 2010). Issues of ethics are of prime importance in narrative inquiry, because people's experiences and stories are used to generate data. In narrative inquiry, the basic principles of research ethics, such as informed consent, permission to withdraw at any time, protection from harm, and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality are necessary but are not good enough (Smythe & Murray, 2000). The above are called procedural ethical issues and are generally observed by all researchers when submitting a research proposal for ethical review (see Appendices C, D and E). These ethical considerations involve respecting the informants' right to withhold information, or to choose to have any section removed later. The anonymity of the participants was ensured by using pseudonyms, and at no time were their schools or other identifiable features revealed. However, these procedural ethical considerations are not considered sufficient for addressing the ethical issues involved in generating personal information in the form of stories under narrative inquiry (Smythe & Murray, 2000).

In narrative inquiry, research ethics is an ongoing process and is constantly negotiated between the researcher and co-participants. Consent is sought continuously at all stages of data generation, including before publishing the stories of the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Appendices E and F show that at each moment in the field before each data generation activity, consent was sought and at any time the participants had the right to withhold information or retract the prior information provided.

According to Smythe and Murray (2000, p. 315), "narrative ethics is inextricably entwined with epistemological issues, namely, issues of narrative ownership (the issue of who has control over the presentation and interpretation of research participants' narratives) and the multiplicity of narrative meaning". This suggests that attention to research ethics in a narrative inquiry should begin at the recruitment phase of the study. Sharing my own experience was also part of adhering to the ethics of narrative inquiries (see Appendices F, H and J). In narrative research, participants are potentially vulnerable in a number of ways. Consent should be mutual and should be constantly negotiated between the participants and researcher as the research goes on, rather than a once-off agreement, as it is in traditional research (Munhall, 1989). Furthermore, participants also need to understand that their stories are not going to be used exactly as they are expressed,

as the researcher will rewrite them to suit the study, guided by other research theories. In this study, multiple narrative meanings were produced to help understand LFL in Zimbabwean secondary schools. Lastly, the researcher's influence and power could affect the presentation of the analysis and findings. This key ethical issue was taken into consideration as the multiplicity of narrative meanings became evident (Smythe & Murray, 2000). The above ethical issues were addressed through debriefing and member checking with the school heads, as suggested by Clandinin and Huber (2010, p. 15).

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the interpretive paradigm that formed the research approach to my study. The interpretive paradigm is usually associated with qualitative studies, and involves the recognition of multiple truths and realities (Creswell, 2013). Narrative inquiry as a methodology was discussed, as well as the four main data generation methods selected to generate data: narrative interviews, artefact inquiry, collage inquiry, and the transect walk. The purposive and convenience sampling methods were presented, and narrative analysis and analysis of narrative were discussed as the primary methods of data analysis. The role of the researcher, and how I negotiated my role with the participants' throughout the study, was discussed. In addition, the rigour and ethics of the study were discussed. The following chapter presents the storied narratives of the Zimbabwean school heads.

CHAPTER 4
NARRATIVE ANALYSIS: THE STORIED NARRATIVES OF THE ZIMBABWEAN SCHOOL HEADS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the methodology and research design of the study. In this chapter, I present the school heads' narratives at the first level of analysis, in response to my first research question: "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" The four narratives are presented as per my participants' chosen metaphorical pseudonyms — Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow — as captured in their profiles in the previous chapter, in order to preserve the anonymity of the participants. The narratives were generated by the use of a storyboard technique. This exercise allowed me to capture their lived experiences, beginning with their childhood, progressing to their school and college experiences, and culminating with their present experiences as school heads. This resulted in a chronological narrative of each participant's key life events, which were summed up by the storyboarding discussed in the subsequent chapter.

The narratives of the participants are presented in the first person "I" (Richardson, 2000). Presenting the schools heads' stories in such a manner meant that I told their stories as the main character of each of the four narratives presented below. The use of the first person allowed me as the researcher to construct and retell the narratives, as I immersed myself in the identities of the school heads. This allowed me to be the character in their stories, therefore allowing my readers to see how the Zimbabwean school heads think and experience the world around them (Rajpal, 2012).

4.2 SHINING STAR: A PACESETTER

Shining Star's narrative is presented below.

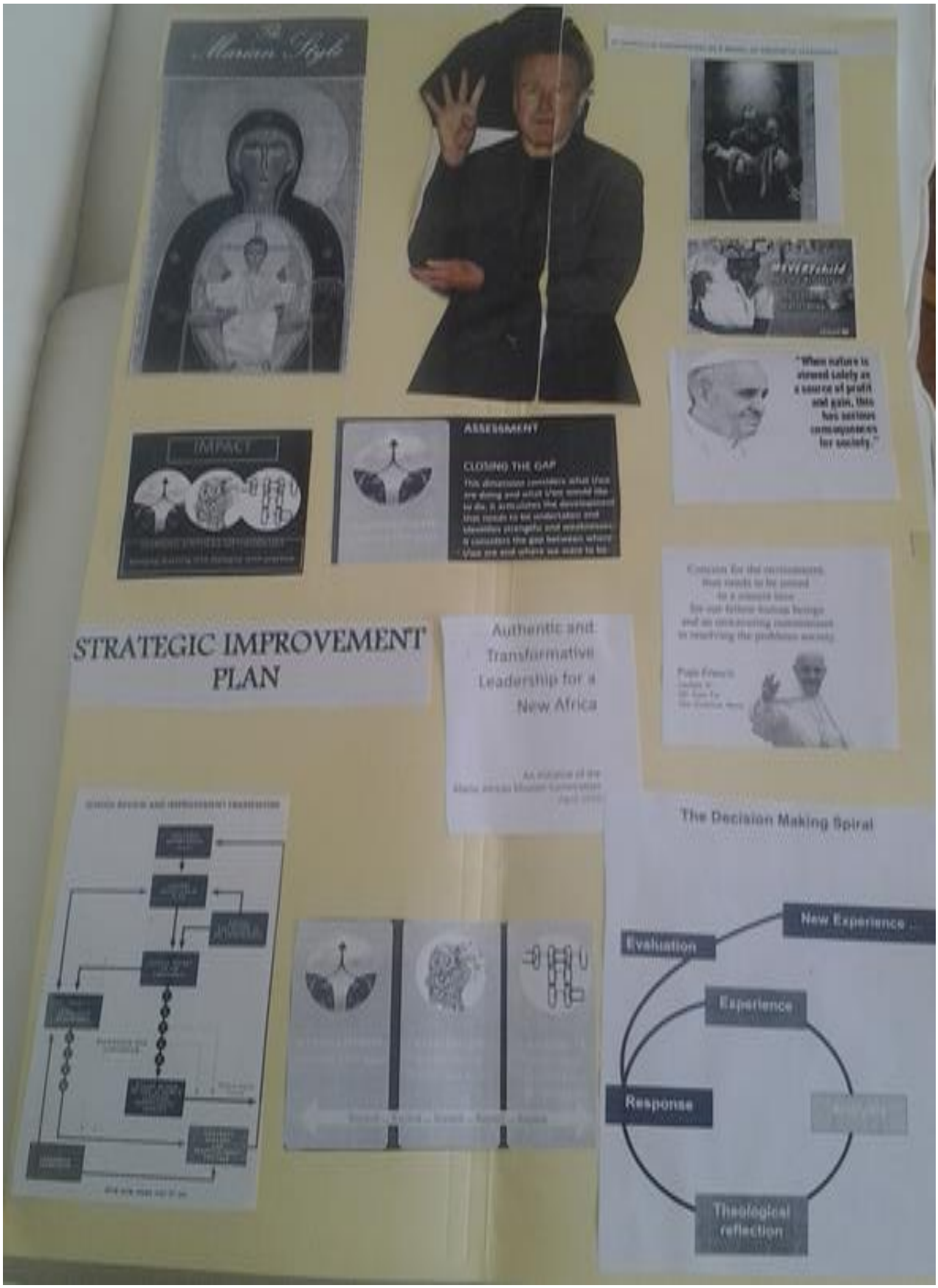


Figure 4.1 Collage of Shining Star's experience as a school head

My role as the head of the family

I am a Zimbabwean man born in the year 1956 in a religious family of six children. I am the first-born child in a Christian family, although most of the other families in the rural areas of Zimbabwe practise African Traditional Religion. Swansea is in the countryside in Newcastle District and that is where I spent most of my childhood. It was a drought-stricken area, so most families survived on peasant farming and cattle rearing as these were feasible. During the holidays, I used to work in our fields and rear the cattle as part of my chores. To support their families better, most men used to migrate and work in big cities. This meant that fathers and husbands would spend little time with their families, usually only on their leave days or special holidays, such as at Christmas time. I barely knew my father as he was mostly absent, working as a chef in the capital city Harare, which was called Salisbury back then. In the absence of my father, I automatically became the family head at an early age, assisting my mother in the fields before going to primary school. I also took care of my younger siblings, showering them with love, making them toys, and teaching them acceptable behaviours and manners. I also made decisions on behalf of the family where possible, lessening the parenting burden on my mother. My primary and secondary education were funded by the money we got after selling our yearly harvest, which was sufficient to pay for my school fees.

I was special and distinguished

I was educated at missionary schools. I did my primary schooling at AC Milan, a Roman Catholic missionary school, beginning in 1963 when I did my Standard 1 until 1969 when I did my Standard 6, now called Grade 7. At primary school, I used to lead my group during reading time. Since English was not our home language, most students were afraid to read out loud in class. However, this was not the case with me. I was always willing to go first, and I enjoyed the challenge and the praise I got after my attempts from our English teacher, Mr Simango.

In 1971, I joined Marist Vale, another Roman Catholic school to commence my secondary education. As a senior enthusiastic and passionate English student, I volunteered to mentor students during my spare time, helping them to read and understand the language with the aim of improving their academic performance. Leading the groups of mentees

made me feel special and distinguished. I had to work extra hard to maintain the new elite status of a volunteer mentor, where other junior students looked up to me as a senior brother and role model. I also became the captain of Champagner house. Champagner house was one of the four groups of dormitories that housed students, the others being Michael, Kizito and Patrick. I was the shortest and smallest in the school, and other students used to be mean and look down on me. As a house captain, I learnt to stand up for myself and was not afraid to enforce the school rules with other students.

My mother, my inspiration

I was mostly raised by my mother, who did everything in her capacity to fill the void of my absent father. I admired my mother's strong character, her sacrifices and mostly her teachings, which included encouragement, especially in relation to my education. She taught me to take my studies seriously, as this was my golden ticket or visa out of the poverty trap of the rural lifestyle. I grew up valuing education and excelling in school, while also doing house chores and working in the fields. This was all because of my visionary mother, who always communicated high educational expectations to me. I learnt to multi-task, as it was very difficult to adjust to the routine of working in the fields before going to school. I was motivated by my mother, who also acted as my role model in the absence of my father, and consequently prepared me to become a responsible man in future. I also learnt from her to inspire and motivate others.

Falling in love with teaching

After completing my Advanced-level education in 1977, I sat at home doing nothing. Bored with this lifestyle, I went to Harare with the aim of getting employment. This is a conversation I recall with my mother.

Mother: My son, it's been a year now sitting at home. With your excellent results, what do you want to do in life?

Shining Star: Oh yes, Mother, I do have something I really want to do and I can't wait to start training.

Mother: Good to hear that, Chirandu (my African totem/praise name). Out with it to your precious mother, my son.

Shining Star: I have a passion to work in the mining industry and want to do a cadetship in mining, doing metallurgy.

Mother: *Maiwe* (exclamation)!!!! … Those are big words, Chirandu, you know your mother is not as educated as you are. However, I am happy if you are doing what makes you happy … I just heard mining. What exactly will you be doing? And I hope you won't be working underground? I always hear scary stories of people dying when mines collapse and I don't want to lose you, Chirandu. You are my hope, everything, and I would not trade you for anything.

Shining Star: After a long pause … Mama (Mother), for anyone to work in the mining industry, even when you will be working in the office, you still have to go underground.

Mother: Even though, you going underground does not sit well with me. I will never have peace, Chirandu, please find another career, this one will kill me soon.

Shining Star: Mmmm … Mama, I also thought of becoming a police officer; however, I am too short.

Mother: It is also a blessing in disguise. I don't like that either but the choice is yours, my son. I know you are passionate about teaching others, so you may as well try the teaching field …

Shining Star: Oh true, Mama, you always know me better. That is exactly my last and final option that I am willing to do. Thank you for the chat …

In 1978, I enrolled at Chelsea Teachers College and I was there until 1980. Although teaching was not at the top of my career list, when I began training I became interested in it. I had been taught at Madrid Secondary School about St Marceline Champagner, a man who had devoted his life to teaching children about God and also helping them acquire education. St Marceline Champagner was the founder of the Marist brothers, who view Mary as the mother of Jesus and as their source of inspiration. At the Marist schools I had

been taught about being open to all possibilities, and being disciplined and obedient like Mary, a woman who responded to a higher calling by carrying the Son of God. Also, I was taught that things would not fall into place if we did not respond to God's calling, and I believe that for me teaching was one of these callings. In addition, the excitement and joy I felt I was going to derive from assisting children to grow and become successful in life through my impact on and input into their lives, urged me on. I do not regret becoming a teacher.

Mathematics, my passion

In 1981, I completed my teacher training, majoring in mathematics. I began my teaching career at a company school called Jersey Secondary, which I fell in love with. It offered incentives, such as $30 on top of the normal salary, which was a lot of money at that time, as well as free electricity and water. As a passionate young teacher, I was disturbed by the poor student attitudes and poor class attendance at the school. To improve this, I made my lessons fun by encouraging the students to actively participate, igniting their passion for the subject. I also motivated and rewarded them with sweets and chocolates as a means of incentivising attendance and participation in my class, until attendance was almost 100%. Unfortunately, I was able to serve this school for only one year, due to the war in Mozambique, which affected our school since it was near the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border. The Matsanga (rebels) issue, if you have heard about it? I quit, and said I do not want to hear gunshots ever again, so I left in 1982.

Becoming a head of department

I joined Juventus Secondary school in Chelsea District from 1982 until 1988–1989. It was a girls-only school, where I served for close to seven years. It was at this school that I received my first official promotion to become a head of department (HOD) for mathematics. The high pass rate for mathematics that I set at Juventus was key in securing my next job as a deputy head. Most officials knew how I had transformed the school's achievement from worst to best. I applied for the deputy head positions at Roma, Real Madrid and Swansea secondary schools. I was offered the position in the same district at Swansea Secondary School, a rural school in my home area.

Advocating for practical life skills

The portrait of myself I presented to you as my artefact (Figure 4.2) was a present I received from one of the students at Swansea. This artefact is a clear indication that there are students out there who have talents, but unfortunately we are not opening up and giving them opportunities to grow and showcase their talents. At times I have actually stated that we need to introduce the arts into our schools, but the greatest hurdle is the teacher-student ratio. At a national level in Zimbabwe, we are hoping that since a new curriculum is being implemented it will open up and emphasise arts and culture.

Food is a basic human need for all school stakeholders. The Marist Brothers run our school farm, which produces milk, meat and fresh vegetables that are available to all stakeholders. Besides food production, the farm is a learning site for subjects like horticulture and animal husbandry. At the school farm, we do practicals for horticulture and for animal husbandry, where we teach students to milk cows manually and mechanically. In addition, there is a space for our students to learn about agricultural production, by transplanting trees and even growing their own vegetables for marks as projects on basic farming skills. I understand how important such life skills are to African children, as I was raised by peasant farming parents.

Inculcating the spirit of competition and a desire to win

Some schools discourage sporting activities, as they believe that they are a waste of academic time, and that students get distracted from their academic learning. However, learning goes beyond academic teaching and learning. Our swimming pool is used for multiple purposes. Apart from swimming, the other important use of our swimming pool is as a venue for holding a party or picnic for the winning house who shows the greatest achievements in sports, discipline and smartness. The picnic has promoted house identification, a spirit of teamwork among the students in each house, a spirit of competition, and a desire to win amongst all the students. This has the benefit of maintaining the school's high standards in terms of academics, smartness and discipline. The teachers use demerits and merits to motivate students to be on their best behaviour and to be smart always. Our vision is to inspire students by making them believe in

themselves and their capabilities. The building of their self-esteem helps and directs them to realise their potential through healthy competition.

The prize-giving is an important ritual or ceremony to honour, acknowledge, and recognise individuals who have done exceptionally well academically, in sports and in other extra-curricular activities like drama, singing and debates. The teachers who have produced the best results over the course of the year and who have the most-improved results are recognised and honoured too. In addition, other members of staff that have contributed to the well-being of the students and the success of the school are honoured. This motivates all stakeholders to work hard to keep the school standards high and to protect the image and reputation of the school through excellence.

The establishment of a digital library, the first in the province

Most schools are hesitant to use laptops, tablets and computers, but I have introduced them and made them compulsory at all levels. I went to the Zimbabwe Centre for High Performance Computing (ZCHPC) with Brother Themba and three school board members with the idea of trying to improve our technology through a partnership and collaboration with the ZCHPC. They conducted a pilot programme for the digital library at our school, the first in the province, and trained the teachers to help integrate information and communications technology (ICT) into the day-to-day implementation of the curriculum. We also work in partnership with the Solom Foundation, which donated the computers, tablets and digital content materials for the students.

In trying to keep abreast of the current technological integrations in the school environment, we have begun to implement our human resources development programme. Currently one teacher is going to the United States of America on an exchange programme, from the beginning of September until the end of October. He is going to experience First World teaching and learning for a couple of months, with the aim of learning key practices that could enhance the learning of all of our own stakeholders. He will visit some polytechnic colleges and universities and engage with scholars who have proposed models that schools could adopt to enhance the integration of ICT in schools. This teacher will become our resource person, as he will be able to induct and professionally develop others in the basics of integrating ICT into our day-to-

day teaching and learning, as well as into our administrative duties. It will make life easier for all of us, especially when teachers are sharing information, knowledge and skills. Therefore, we are also using him as a link person with the ZCHPC.

Our initial library had old books and we decided to improve it by turning it into a digital library. I initiated the upgrade of our library into a modern digital library, which is now one of its kind in the province. It comprises of a paperless work station that is accessible 24/7 by both teachers and students as long as Wi-Fi (wireless local area networking) is available and the computers are fully functional, but users can also use tablets and their cell phones to access reading materials. The library has been of benefit to everyone, and has enhanced the learning of both teachers and students, therefore improving academic performance. It does not restrict users to books only, but extends their educational information search to other educational sources such as journals, Internet sources and videos on YouTube.

I always strive for a better school with the help of stakeholders

Good schools take time to create, and it requires a collective effort for them to become a reality. We meet as a team to do annual evaluations to continue the cycle of our school learning improvement journey. As a school, we evaluate ourselves by visiting other different top academic and sporting schools like the Solom Foundation, Peter House and St Georges. We look at their infrastructure, their facilities and their practices, and then we come back with a different perspective. We align ourselves with what we think is best for our school to improve. We acknowledge that we cannot match some of their standards or get to where they are, especially when we consider the fees they charge and the resources they have. However, with the limited resources we have we can still change and become a better school. We are also making progress in our own right and in our own way. Our involvement with the communities around us is in line with Pope Francis's teaching, when he mentions the need for us to love our fellow human beings in an unwavering commitment to solve the problems in our society.

When I was appointed as the school head at Swansea Secondary School, so many things were not right and I vowed to turn the school around. The students smoked marijuana freely, resulting in them being very disrespectful and rude towards the teachers, who

became afraid of them. None of the teachers dared or were willing to risk their lives to confront this drug abuse issue to create a better school. I was willing to risk my life for a better school by confronting the problem of students abusing dagga. I knew I could not win this battle alone. Hence, I used my interpersonal skills — being inclusive and approachable, listening and incorporating stakeholders — to form strong relationships and to put together a team to come up with solutions for a better school. As a united front, and by including the police, we identified and eliminated the source of drugs (which was the people in the surrounding villages) and a healthy learning environment was restored. This made waves within my District, which in years later contributed to the reason I was chosen by the Brothers in the neighbouring Catholic boarding school (who ran the school during those years) as a suitable candidate to assume the deputy head position at the school.

Figure 4.2 Shining Star's artefact: A distinguished self

You are a Shining Star

My highest qualification is a Bachelor of Education in Administration and Policy Planning. Figure 4.2 shows portrait that a student drew of me and gave to me as a gift after I had completed my Administration and Policy degree. I graduated with this degree at the age of 50 years, and have been a source of inspiration to many people in my school to continue learning. I wanted to show my children, the students, the staff members and other stakeholders that learning does not end and age does not matter. Your will matters most of all, if you want to be a learner.

The artefact portrays a man who is an upright individual. This is why students and some of my staff are always saying, “Sir, you are a Shining Star. You bring light and direction to both learners and other staff. You are a role model, disciplinarian and advisor”. The teachers of today are not committed at all. They are always thinking of what they can get financially out of their jobs, and that their input should be equivalent to what they are getting, yet children have nothing to do with your remuneration, as they are innocent souls. In inspiring my teachers to give their best, I always tell them that if you want to earn a lot of money, teaching is not the right field because in teaching there is no money. Instead, there is the sense of satisfaction that one gets in the end when one is able to say, “Look at my products. They are doing well”.

4.3 MARTYR: THE IRON LADY

Martyr’s narrative is presented below.

Figure 4.3 Collage of Martyr's experience as a school head

Growing up in my rural home

I am a female who was born in 1966 at Crystal Palace, a rural area in the Reading Province. I am actually turning half a century old this year. My family comprises of six boys and two girls, and I am seventh in the line of birth. I was born into a Roman Catholic family. My father was a police officer in the British South African Police, whereas my mother was a stay-at-home wife. My father's job paid well although the major disadvantage was that he was transferred from one camp to another as part of his job, resulting in most of us being sent to boarding schools. I grew up in our rural home in Crystal Palace. I used to play with clay toys, which taught us to be creative since we did not have modern toys like dolls. I used to play with my sisters and other age mates after school. As a girl child I had to look for firewood, cook when it was my duty and fetch water for home use, since we did not have running water as they did in the towns.

My mom grew maize and groundnuts on our small, rural farm, and selling the harvest would supplement my father's income. I remember that during the farming season we had to wake up very early for everyone to go and work in the fields before going to school. My father's favourite sayings to motivate us to work hard were "Working doesn't kill" and "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger". This is where I learnt to work hard in life, to take charge of my life and to become self-reliant. I began my primary school education at a rural school in Ajax where my father was stationed. I was fortunate to be in a well-resourced rural school. I had to finish the rest of my primary school at Valencia since my father retired in 1979 to our rural home. I went on to do my secondary schooling in a unisex Catholic missionary school, which was strict, although I learnt good values like hard work, honesty and respect for others.

My family role models

My mother frequently visited my father at his stationed police camp, leaving us in the trusted care of my elder sister, Tanaka. In my mother's absence, Tanaka would assume the role of looking after us and cooking. I learnt to take responsibility for my younger sister in the same way, and I looked up to my eldest sister, who was loving, caring, nurturing and always there for us. Later when she became a teacher, I also admired how she supported us financially by paying our school fees while also being able to afford to

provide for her own family. This made me to aspire to be a teacher. From my father, I learnt to appreciate protocol and order, and to be an organised person from an early age. My father was my role model; he was a really organised person, who led the family in an exemplary way. As a family, we knew who to approach if there were issues we needed to discuss. We would approach my mother, and then she would approach my father. Protocol had to be observed for peace and harmony to prevail in our family.

An active Christian leader

As a young person, I became very active in the church youth movements, which saw me being elected as the youth church secretary. As the youth church secretary, I learnt to take and read meeting minutes, create agendas, provide feedback and account for organisational activities. This helped me to develop self-confidence, including the ability to address large groups of people. In addition, during my secondary schooling days I used to actively participate in my church and school choirs. Singing is one of my hobbies, and it led me to be chosen as a leader in the school choir. I grew up as a religious person and as an active member of the Catholic Church. At college, I was a choir leader, and was elected to the Student Representative Council (SRC), earning the name 'Bishop' even though I was a woman. As a Bishop, I was the middlewoman between the priest in charge and the rest of the college. During this time, I invited students to contribute their ideas for making our religious department more viable during my term. We introduced Christian camping trips, something that saw the enrolment of members increasing at the college.

Self-empowerment: my pillar for professional development

In the late 1980s, I finished my Ordinary-level studies and wrote the Cambridge examinations, since the ZIMSEC examinations only came into being in 1995. After passing my exams, I proceeded to do my three years of teacher training at Bondolfi Teachers College in Millan, between 1990 and 1992. I got my first teaching position in Harare in 1993 at a Catholic school. I empowered myself whilst working full time, and registered for Advanced levels, majoring in two subjects: Divinity (Bible Studies) and English. After completion, I enrolled at the University of South Africa (UNISA), to

pursue my Bachelor of Education degree. On graduating I was also promoted to the school leadership team, and felt the need to continue empowering myself with education. I proceeded to do my Honours degree at the same university. I wanted to carry on studying so I thought of pursuing my Master of Education degree. I applied online and was accepted by the University of London. I sourced some funds with the assistance of the school, and managed to go and study my Master's in the UK for a year at the University of London. Both my Honours through UNISA and my Master's through the University of London were related to Educational Leadership and Management.

God, my source of inspiration

Throughout my journey to become a school head, God has been the source of my inspiration. I remember that first I was chosen as school council member, where I would meet with the school board, the head and the deputy, and with members of the school management team to discuss school issues. As a senior teacher I used to contribute wholeheartedly. I think my contributions were valued and greatly appreciated, and as a result I was rewarded and appointed as a deputy head. I stayed in that post for a year, and then an opening emerged for me to become the school head at this school, where I have been the head for more than a decade now. It did not happen overnight. Instead it was a process that involved hard work, patience, perseverance and learning to develop myself professionally and personally.

Veritas: **"I stand for the truth ….."**

Figure 4.4 Martyr's artefact: A strong believer

The artefact I chose speaks about my experiences of teaching over two decades in the same private school, hence the logo. It reminds me so much of what the school is about. The school motto on the logo is *Veritas*, which means "truth", which is my way of life both in and outside of my school environment. Christianity encourages me to link this to the gospel truth, which is unchallenged, and which emphasises the values of honesty, trustworthiness, authenticity and humility. I stand for the truth and I would die for the truth, but sometimes I have found out that people do not always take pride in saying the truth. In this school, I ask teachers to speak the truth in their teaching and the way they carry themselves, in the documents they write, in their preparation and marking of exams, and in giving relevant feedback to students.

As a school, our culture or traditions that we pass on from one generation to the next, especially to those joining the school, are an induction into the culture of truth of the school. Reflection is part of the truth, where all individuals take a moment to self-evaluate their contribution to the well-being of our students. In our school we conduct an annual review with all stakeholders to look back at how the year has gone by, to take note of what we have done, what we have not managed to do, where we did well, where we need to improve in order for us to plan for the upcoming year. I meet each Tuesday with the teachers to look back at the week that has passed and to plan ahead. We normally have

our little staff meeting for 30 minutes during break, and it is a time for checking in with others to see where they are in relation to our set targets. It is also a time for hearing what people think we should be doing differently, what has happened, and how we can improve in the coming week.

My role models from various walks of life

There are certain people who have inspired me in my life. My former school head was also my role model, because of the way she led with passion. She had a vision for the school and wanted the best out of all of us. This attitude helped me when I took over. I had to look at people as assets, especially the teachers, who are there as an investment that we need to capitalise on. Without them working for the good of the school my leadership is nothing. I am not a person who enjoys politics; however, I followed the American presidential elections when Barack Obama was running for presidential office for the first time, as their first Black candidate. I learnt that the American people are proud of their democracy. The importance of democracy to the American leaders and their people inspired me to be humble and to be prepared to accept contributions from others as the leader in my school. Obama's campaign slogan was "Yes we can", which inspired me to believe that "Yes I can" lead my school. I can make changes, and make a difference in my own leadership. In my little school, with whatever few resources I have, yes I can make a difference to the students' lives. In Africa, Mandela reminds me of the leadership he exercised, which was democratic and servant in nature. He was not autocratic but was instead there to listen and to bridge the gap between different ethnic groups in South Africa, to form the rainbow nation through emphasising a shared vision of a new South Africa.

Learning the art of delegating

As an individual I have a problem with delegating because I fear that people might let me down. Delegating was not my cup of tea, but I have learnt over the years that it is not all about me but is rather about us as a team and a school. I have learnt to delegate but it did not come naturally. It has been a very difficult practice because I want people to meet

deadlines, and if they fail, I get very upset and do it myself. I have tried to get others involved, especially when we have our staff meetings. Delegating has given me joy, satisfaction and confidence. It has helped me to trust the teachers with little items or issues. I have noticed that delegating a task or responsibility has the ability to empower and build responsibility and maturity in my teachers. Even though initially I found it difficult to delegate, the more I do so, the more my teachers became grounded in themselves, which raises both their self-confidence and their self-esteem.

"Do unto others as you want them to do unto you…"

Personally, as a Christian and as a school head, I am guided by the Biblical golden rule, which I frequently emphasise: do unto others as you want them to do unto you. I emphasise this in particular by focusing on what stakeholders should say about each other. Whatever we say should not damage someone's reputation or the reputation of the school, but we should use words for the good of all. As a leader I always say to my staff, let us watch what we say to our students. If we want the best out of them, let us encourage, support and motivate them to believe in themselves. We should not say words to demotivate or rebuke the students so that they lose their self-esteem and see themselves as losers. I do not allow any staff member to speak ill of another stakeholder, especially students and parents, because doing so will affect their performance and reputation.

Teaching and learning: the centre of our daily activities

I believe schools are centres of learning and that the responsibility of teachers and other stakeholders is to provide students with various opportunities to create a bright future for all. As a school, we have embraced technology for the students, to facilitate improved curriculum implementation and delivery. We have increased the use of computers to conduct research for current information and as a substitute for textbooks, as students can access books electronically on their computers. I take pleasure in the way we have developed our classrooms to be centres of learning. We have made sure that each classroom has a chalkboard in the corner, and we now have whiteboards that can be used with laptops and projectors. The whiteboard is more user friendly to the learners, since

there is a special pen they use which they can erase, and it is interactive in nature. Without these resources, none of the good results would be realised.

Not every child is gifted academically

In this school we also focus on physical learning and we aim to win trophies in extra-curricular activities, especially sports. The success of a school is not only classroom-based, but includes extra-curricular activities; hence, there is a need to facilitate these activities. Not every child is gifted academically. Some are gifted athletes or sportswomen or men; hence, it is good to balance the school's focus and fill any gaps that students might be experiencing. As a school we have gone the extra mile to install a heated swimming pool, becoming one of the few schools to have one in the country. This swimming pool has brought a lot of success for the school. We have done extremely well in our league and have won trophies. The heated swimming pool has been an added advantage in getting our school to raise its standards, so we take a lot of pride in our swimming pool and the joy it has brought to the whole school. An important milestone and memory it brought was the school attaining first position after 10 years in our swimming league of elite schools in this province. For me this was the climax of my leadership, and I took pride in managing to build up a struggling swimming team with my teachers until it came first in a very competitive league, although it did not happen overnight.

Becoming a music teacher

Music is part of our African culture, our Christian way of life, and our everyday lives. I am and have always been a singer, and I recognised the need for our school to nurture the students' passion for music. This includes singing, playing various instruments and having a professionally qualified teacher to teach music. Music has brought a lot of glory to our school. Our school loves to sing and we have a wonderful teacher who has helped the girls to believe in themselves in such a way that when they sing they express their feelings and how they want to see the world, and how life has been lived by other people. Our music room is a place where children love to go because they are free to express

themselves, as opposed to having to sit in the classroom and learn mathematics, English or any other subject. We have begun to teach students how to read music, to try to get music to be understood by all students in the classroom setting. The students have begun to appreciate so much what music does for them. We have formed an orchestra with the help of parents who share the same sentiments about the importance of music as part of our school curriculum.

My vision: A life-giving school

Teaching to me is a life-giving activity and this is my vision of our school. As a life-giving school we are building young lives by giving students a lifetime, whole-child education that focuses on academic performance, on cultural aspects such as dance, music, art and drama, and on moral education. The education provided also includes general and non-traditional sports, such as swimming, and a spiritual grounding that teaches young people to think critically and equip them to become contributing members of the community. A holistic, life-giving school not only focuses on teaching and learning that involves grades or marks, but also focuses on the development of all aspects of growth of the students.

My happy school family

One of my strengths is that I have a vision, which is the direction in which I want to see the school moving, and which I openly share with the other people around me. Another strength is that I am able to organise. I can organise any situation, even a difficult situation, and turn it into an opportunity for learning and growth. In the school, I am a dignified woman who is a figure of authority and a mother, and also the school leader. I choose life because running the school means I am doing something that is life giving. Another aspect of my vision for the school is that it includes all stakeholders as a happy family. Heads and teachers should aim to understand today's students through caring, and through understanding the students' background and families. This is key for schools to be able to cater for students' needs, including creating a conducive environment for meaningful teaching and learning. Our students come from different family backgrounds.

Some come from happy families, while others are being raised by single parents who are struggling. Yet others are from child-headed families, but happy families create happy students. This is what I have noticed in our school. We cater for students who come from broken families and try to build a family life for them in the school so that they do not feel lost or left out.

A *hunhu* head

My leadership each day starts with being punctual. I am the first person to arrive at school and I arrive on time as a way of leading by example and becoming a role model. My presence and confidence are my key strengths, as they help to organise people, time and resources. I have done this faithfully so that the teachers can get the students to do the same. I have encouraged them to be on time for school and for their classes. My presence helps teaching and learning to take place at the scheduled times, thus minimising teaching time lost due to lateness or absenteeism. In my school, teachers also take joy and pride in noting that the school head's office is always open when they arrive. I do this so that I am able to greet them, welcome them and find out how they and their families are. This allows them to go to class feeling that they have been welcomed by me, and shows them that I care not only about their professional lives but also about their personal welfare, which makes us more connected at a personal level. This also gives them a sense of oneness and family, where we all feel that we belong and can confide in one another if we have problems. I base my leadership on *hunhu*, which informs my strong interpersonal relationships that involve all stakeholders, be they parents, teachers or students, and that are mutually formed on *hunhu* principles of respect and trust.

I acknowledge in many ways that stakeholders should work together as a team to benefit from the synergies that are created through involving everyone in the management of the school. I accommodate and accept suggestions from everyone. When you are humble and you have humility as part of your leadership style, it actually stands out. In the school, people open up to me and let me know exactly how they feel and how they have experienced the way I lead or manage the school, which helps me to improve. In the staffroom, the teachers and I plan together as a teaching body, especially in relation to our focus for the term and the year as a team.

I am a good teacher

Teaching for me has been a profession of passion. I feel and think it is a real spiritual calling. As the school head, I see myself as a mother who is there to nurture, care for and offer guidance to the students and to other stakeholders. For the record, I am a good teacher. Below is a poem I wrote which supports my claims.

I am good teacher

I have a vision
Bad situations, good ones
Marvel the humble
Dare to take risk

Bad situations, good ones
Weekly, monthly and yearly
Dare to take risk
Watch what you say

Weekly, monthly and yearly
A wish list, I believe
Watch what you say
Dreams come true

4.4 CHAMELEON: AN ADAPTIVE INDIVIDUAL

Chameleon's narrative is presented below.

Figure 4.5 Collage of Chameleon's experiences as a school head

Family background

I am a man who was born in 1971 in a rural village in Celtic in Aston Villa Province. I am 45 years old and am a Christian by religion, affiliated to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. I am the sixth born son in a family of nine. My father was the sole breadwinner in the family, and worked as a school head, while my mother was a housewife. The family depended on my father's salary, although it was difficult for eleven of us to survive on his small salary.

Growing up and early educational experiences

Thinking back to growing up in the village reminds me of the scorching sun we had to endure going to school or in the fields during the farming season. The area was drought-stricken, although people did subsistence farming and reared cattle for a living. I started school towards the end of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle, in 1979. I went to a farm primary school that was located near the school at which my father taught, and which was heavily under-resourced. I had to walk a total of 16 kilometres per day to school and back. I went to Venezivela Secondary School in 1989, which was also under-resourced, and the standards were deplorable. I then transferred to a boarding school after my brothers had finished their secondary school, as my father's income could now cover my boarding school fees. We sometimes went to school without having paid all of our school fees, and sometimes my father paid in instalments, but we all managed to complete our education to tertiary level. Being a prefect in both primary and high school was very beneficial to me as an individual. I was taught how to lead, albeit on a small scale, but the idea was to groom us to become future leaders.

Like father, like son

My hardworking father was my mentor and role model. He had a die-hard attitude that he learnt from my grandfather, who was also a teacher. He discouraged me from training as an agricultural demonstrator, as he wanted me to become a teacher like him. I joined Bidvest Teachers College in 1996 and completed my training in 1998. My father was a visionary man who inspired me, especially in terms of how he tackled issues. He

emphasised being humble, and the importance of listening to others so that you can incorporate their different views and ways of doing things to become a better person. At our rural home, he used to take me to the *dare* as a small boy. The Shona word *dare* translates loosely as "court", and is a meeting place where the elders meet in the evenings to discuss different issues concerning the community. The elders use their collective wisdom to make informed decisions to address these issues, although the chief or headman has the final say. At the *dare*, leadership is based on collective wisdom and on utilising the experience of the elders, who are the custodians of our moral and ethical values. This experience taught me how people should relate to others; people should discuss issues, and deliberate on the different issues that may arise in our community. From a *dare* point of view, as an individual you need to listen to different people so that you can have enough information to make better decisions.

Quest for knowledge and professional advancement

At Bidvest Teachers College I was elected to become a student representative for student accommodation matters after I stood up against the administration on accommodation issues that the interim representatives were afraid to raise. All the matters that concerned students in the residence were reported to me, and I used to make decisions where possible. After I completed my teaching qualification in 1998, I went on to acquire a Bachelor of Education in Administration in 2001, and a Bachelor of Education Degree in 2007. I also furthered my studies with the same university by doing a Master of Education in Administration. In addition, I did a number of courses centred on educational leadership and management. Furthermore, I did a monitoring and evaluation programme, where I learnt what to implement in schools. Courses in clinical supervision taught me how to monitor teachers and school activities. I aim to be better each day through learning, and perhaps when you come back again next time I might be a Doctor of Philosophy, if all goes well.

I qualified as a teacher in 1998 and was promoted to senior teacher after two years. In 2004 I became the HoD for languages, and in 2005 I applied for a deputy head post for which I was short-listed for appointment. I went for the interview, and was successfully promoted to deputy head. In 2006 I became a substantive deputy head, and in 2009 I was

appointed acting head because the head had retired. In 2010 I applied for the post of school head, was interviewed, and was successful. In that same year, I became the substantive school head.

I am an open book

As an individual, I do not hide what I am thinking from people, and I am outspoken. I also do not hesitate to tell the truth, or to say what is on my mind. Therefore, in most cases when I meet with people sharing ideas, I am not reserved. I speak from my heart and feelings, and from an early age, if someone did something I appreciated, I openly told them my sentiments. I would tell them that this is good. Sometimes people do not do exactly what I would like them to, and I criticise them and suggest alternatives. As a result, people have seen the talent and ability in me to relate truthfully to others. This has translated into a sense of openness in the school, where all stakeholders are able to freely and openly discuss issues.

Figure 4.6 Chameleon's artefact: a team player

Our motto: "Nobody does it better than us"

The Ministry of Education gave us a prestigious award in 2015, the Secretary's Bell, an artefact that we regard as the epitome of excellence. As a school we are geared for success, and that is why our motto is "Nobody does it better than us". This is what motivates us to be in the mode of success and makes us aim to succeed in whatever we are doing as a school, whether it is academics or extracurricular activities. Whenever we do an activity, we constantly say to our students that we need to do it better than others, and this inculcates a spirit of competition, motivation and success in them. I believe that anything is possible if we put in place the proper structures and form a strong team that supports the school vision of being able to achieve anything. I cannot do everything as a school head. The teachers, students and supporting staff — all of us — play a part. I regard leadership as being built by different stakeholders marrying their input together to realise their potential and to enable the vision of the school to be achieved. We try to sail as a team. I believe the Secretary's Bell award was the result of such teamwork.

I learnt that anyone can be a leader and all can lead

Growing up in the African community, I learnt that anyone can be a leader and that all can lead. The only thing one needs to do is be guided so that one can lead better. As a school head, I empower the students and teachers to become future leaders through education, delegation, sharing responsibilities and increasing accountability. I also give the students the chance to contribute and to have a say in choosing their own leaders, thereby sharing decision making with them in areas affecting their lives. I am teaching them democratic values, which allow them to learn how to deliberate matters. This also shows them the importance of involving other people concerned in decision making. I believe everyone has the potential to lead but what is lacking in our system are the opportunities for students to showcase their leadership skills. A school is about empowering people, and about creating prospects for life advancement for all stakeholders.

Trust is key in my leadership

Trust is an important issue in a school, especially where people are working together for a common goal. Trust is key in my leadership. I trust my team members through delegating and sharing responsibility with them, for mutual trust to exist in our school. This led to our winning of the Secretary's Bell award as a team. The people you lead need to trust you, since they perform their tasks based on the degree of trust they feel in you. If you are a trusted leader, you will have integrity. Leadership is about maintaining righteous ways of life and actions, so that you can achieve what you want to achieve in the school. Schools should be for the benefit of the students' education, and not for personal gain or profit through corruption, nepotism, looting and embezzlement of school funds. As a leader, you should be approachable, should not refuse other people's contributions, and should value and respect other stakeholders. In the process, you will learn from others and also earn their trust, because they will feel that you welcome their input and support them. Whenever we are faced with corrupt activities in a school, it destroys the image of the school and the trust people have in the school head. Everything that a school head does is centred on trust. If you are not trusted, you cannot lead, because people will doubt every decision you make, and say that you cannot deliver what you promise.

I motivate stakeholders to perform better

As a trusted school head, I capitalised on motivating my subordinates to perform better. It is very important for leaders to motivate stakeholders, as I have seen that it gives a sense of urgency or purpose for them to perform better. If there is no motivation, performance is generally poor. Motivation also takes different forms; it can involve monetary incentives, motivational talks, and applause or recognition of those who have done well. In our school it is through motivation that our teachers perform best. Even in the classroom, students perform better if they are motivated, so as a leader who wants good results I motivate all stakeholders to go the extra mile.

I value collective effort over individual talent and effort

My role as the school head is to build strong teams within my school. A winning team is well constructed, works together, and supports and learns from each other. Each player combines his or her efforts with those of the rest, so that they can perform together as one. I value collective effort over individual talent and effort. As a leader, I need to accommodate a number of things that other people believe in. I need to listen to them, to their problems, and to issues that they have raised so that I do not ignore their issues or challenges. By listening to different groups, I become a better leader, and I am able to gather new information to correct myself. I believe successful schools are built from strong teams made up of all stakeholders — parents, students and teachers — who share the same vision, goals and spirit of success.

My office is my safe haven

School heads need to promote learning for all, beginning with the students and including teachers, parents and themselves. We need to acquire more knowledge so that we can be better school heads. I need to be educated through furthering my studies as part of my personal and professional development. One needs to be a lifelong learner. As for the education of students, I am always monitoring it from my office, which is my safe haven. In the office I also check on the teachers' records and scheme books. I check on them and assess where they are in terms of curriculum coverage. I also check on students' exercise books, after which the teacher has to come in and we discuss my findings and various ways forward. I also check on students' reports, student progress, and any other information that needs my attention.

Communication is very important in schools

A school has many stakeholders and there is a need for proper communication channels that can relay important information. Communication is part of our school mission and vision, and stakeholders always need to consider it in their thoughts and actions. The staffroom is an idea-exchange room, where strategic information is conveyed to the teachers, especially about what we intend to do in the future. We also conduct our staff

development meetings there. The staff room is our *dare* meeting point, where I take into account the rich diversity of our teachers. They have a lot to offer, since they come from different backgrounds and think differently. Through their participation in collective decision making, and through incorporating their different views, we can improve our school. Teamwork and a collective effort on the part of all stakeholders enhances a sense of school ownership, and results in decisions being effectively implemented. School stakeholders, especially teachers, normally feel free to communicate when they are in the staff room, since it is their comfort zone.

At the assembly point we also address students and relay information to them about discipline, neatness and attendance, and we check on these aspects too by conducting inspections. It is a meeting point for students, teachers and administrators to interact and share the same vision of where the school has to go. In addition, we call the school hall the motivational room, since it is where students write their final examinations. As a school, we always tell students during our church services to make us proud and to keep the standards of excellence high. Our school is known for the high achievements in public examinations. We also use assemblies to arrange the students according to their academic positions at the end of each school term, so that they are motivated to change their current position. The hall is viewed as both a spiritual and an academic house.

"I am situational like a chameleon…"

The chameleon is a suitable metaphor for my leadership style; its colours according to the situation it finds itself in, and so does my leadership style. Certain types of leadership work in certain situations; however, this does not necessarily mean that the same style can work with teacher X or Y. So I need to be flexible and adapt to changes both in and outside the school environment. In poetic form below I express this:

I am situational like a chameleon

I need to adapt to the changes
Take my time to make decisions
Slowly but surely
I always get to my destination

Take time to make decisions
I am situational
I always get to my destination
Cautious when approaching
I am situational
I change colours
Cautious when approaching
Blend with the environment

4.5 RAINBOW: A COMPASSIONATE BEING

Rainbow's narrative is presented below.

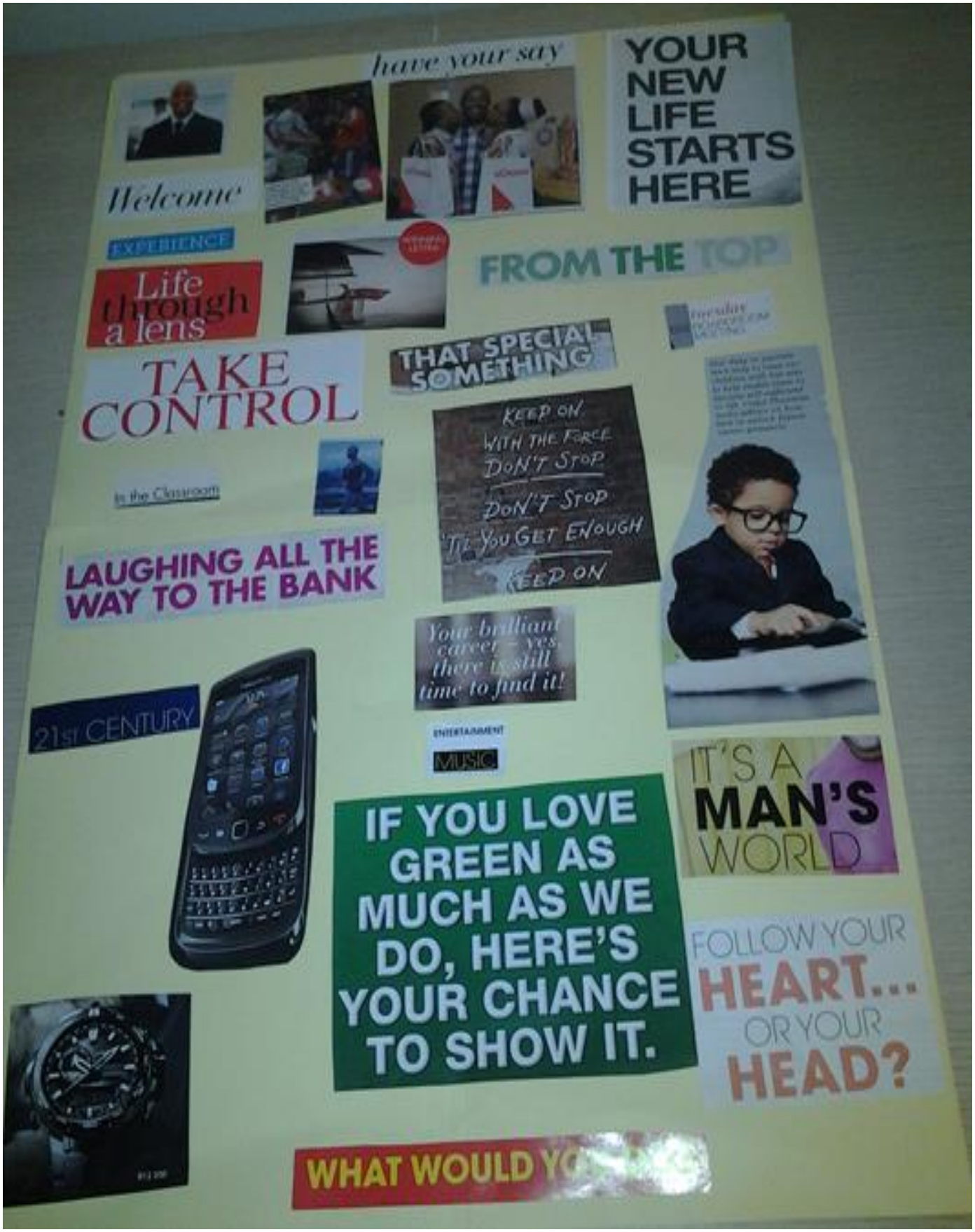


Figure 4.7 Collage of Rainbow's experiences as a school head

Munyaradzi

I am man who was born in 1966. I was given the Shona name Munyaradzi, meaning "consoler" in English. I turned fifty years old this year. I am a member of the Anglican Church of the Province of Central Africa (ACPCA) member and I love my religion. I grew up when this country was still called Rhodesia in the Galax area in the Midlands province. The area was a rural area surrounded by white commercial farmers, because of the good rains and fertile lands. I am the seventh born in a family of nine, but one of my siblings passed on. Even though I am not the first born, most of my family members feel free to share their problems and seek advice from me because of my character. I am a friendly, open and easy going person, who is always there to listen. When someone is talking, I give him or her my full attention, whether they are young or old. I tend to nod to make them talk more by showing them that I am interested and I maintain eye contact always. I have been a blessing and joy to my family, and to the people around me. I have lived up to my name, Munyaradzi, through consoling, supporting and comforting others in their times of need. I am a vibrant, determined, dedicated and focused individual, who aims to achieve both personal objectives and school goals. I also easily blend in with others in any environment or situation. I would say that metaphorically, I am a rainbow.

Herding cattle in the rural areas

In the rural areas, the pride and wealth of people was judged by the herd of cattle a family had. My parents supported my education and they could afford to send me to school because they had a large herd of 80–90 cattle. I used to lead a herd of up to 60 cattle from an early age with some other children from the community. My parents wanted to inculcate the values of responsibility and accountability in me. I made sure all the cattle were taken to the grazing fields and brought back in their correct number. I also had to lock up the cattle before sunset and report what took place at the grazing fields, as well as the decisions I had made, where possible.

Chief library prefect

In 1973 I enrolled for Grade 1 at Mukonde Primary School, a farm school that was not well resourced. During my final year of primary school, I was chosen to be head boy. In 1984 I joined Barcelona Secondary School, where I was groomed by the Canadian teachers. They taught us that education is a lifelong journey and never to stop learning. They also taught us to treasure books as they are a source of knowledge that can be used by generations to come. They encouraged us not to steal books from the library, but rather to protect them. This motivated me to excel in school, and since I was a library prefect I had access to all kinds of useful books for my different subjects. I became a role model to the other students and library prefects, earning me the position of chief library prefect in my final year.

Farming was my passion

My inspiring parents wanted me to become someone in life. In those days children did not have much control over their career choice. This is a conversation I had one evening with my parents at the dinner table.

Father: Son, I am glad you have been a hard worker in school and you have made us proud.

Mother: I agree with you, Baba (Father). Let us give him a chance to say what he wants to do for a living.

Rainbow: I really want to be a farmer.

Father: You must be kidding, my son. I thought you would opt for an office job or for teaching, as it is a job that is highly respected these days.

Rainbow: I am serious, Baba. I have always wanted to become a farmer like you and like these white farmers surrounding us, who keep Merino sheep, some up to a thousand sheep, and orchards with a variety of fruits, like apples, plums and yellow peaches.

Mother: You are really serious about that… I think you need to listen to your father. He knows best.

Rainbow: I even wrote in my Grade 6 book that I want to be a farmer and I have it still today. This is who I really want to be.

Father: I still stand with my first suggestion. What you wrote in Grade 6 was a long time ago and that was for that time. The best is for you to go to university. It's our dream to have our child be a graduate. End of discussion. Just make us happy and proud as always.

After passing my Advanced-level exams in 1990 with flying colours, I proceeded to the University of Zimbabwe, where I did my Bachelor of Arts degree between 1991 and 1993, with the aim of becoming a teacher. After my Bachelors of Arts general degree, I proceeded to do a Postgraduate Diploma in Education to qualify as a teacher.

My ambition

I started teaching at Virgo School in 1994, where I became HOD of divinity and history after my third year at the school. I also became a cluster resource coordinator for seven school heads, which prompted my other colleagues to advise me to apply for the deputy head position. I applied for and was given the deputy headship position at Manchester Government School in Makoni North. There I acted as the head for nearly three years, because the school did not have a substantive head. I then transferred to Paris Saint-Germain High School, an Anglican Diocese School, where I became the substantive deputy head. The school head and I worked very hard to upgrade the face of the school, and went on to fence the school because it was in a dilapidated state.

My colleagues then suggested that I would be qualified to head boarding schools, because by then I had gone through council schools and government schools, and my final ambition was to head a boarding school. I was supposed to come to my current school in 2011, but was prevented from doing so due to church politics. Instead, I was sent to Bayern Munich High School, which had the largest number of student enrolments in Manicaland province. At that time it had 1700 students and out of necessity had to employ a "hot seat" system of learning. This system was designed so that some students attended classes in the morning, and when they were dismissed in the afternoon other students would arrive to start classes that lasted into the evening. The school had permanent 88 teachers and working there was a good experience for me. It was a litmus test of my

abilities, and I was very successful because I stayed there for three to four years before being appointed as the school head of Tottenham Hotspur. My behaviour is one of my strengths as an individual. My character easily encourages people to feel confident in me and to trust me as an individual. I obtained my current position because the people who employed me knew my character and what I had achieved. At another school, Sevilla Secondary, I spearheaded the electrification of the school and the construction of various facilities with the sponsorship and support of Castrol. Because I was known as a disciplinarian, I had many nicknames there.

Figure 4.8 Rainbow's artefact: A winner

Winning is part of the school culture

My chosen artefact, shown in Figure 4.8, is a picture of the trophies that the students have won in various school competitions, for example for environmental management, netball and soccer. These trophies are a symbol of hard work on the part of the students and encouragement and motivation on the part of the school. They also symbolise the school stakeholders' commitment and teamwork — not only teamwork in sports activities, but also in this institution. This shows the culture of teamwork and team spirit at this school. A leader is different from a manager in the school context. Managers are mostly found in companies where there is a results-based output. In schools we have to adopt similar results-based criteria, but sometimes leadership qualities are very important in bringing out the best in people. Leadership is also the ability to bring the right people together to create a recipe for success. At this school, we use various platforms to share ideas and receive feedback from the stakeholders. For example, we have an annual parents meeting, and parents come to the school for prize-giving. Consultation days are also important, and we usually place suggestion boxes in every classroom so that we can also get the parents' views on what they want changed or improved to enhance the provision of quality education to their children. Winning is part of our school culture, which motivates us to always aim high, win, and achieve as a school.

I am democratic

Schools are often led according to a bureaucratic point of view. As a school head you are placed at the top of the hierarchy in your school, and leading from the top is not always easy. There is a stigma associated with always having to tell, direct, dictate, and give people instructions, which needs to be changed. As a school head who manages from the top, one should be strategic. I adopt certain laissez-faire strategies, and sometimes I am autocratic, but mostly I am democratic and involve others in decision making in matters that affect them or their working environment or conditions. I am a Rainbow in nature. I give full and equal attention to all stakeholders, regardless of their age or position, by listening so that I can assist in any possible way. Even students may come to me needing help, and I have to support them.

Students need to be loved, valued and appreciated in schools

As an individual growing up, the love I was given by my parents taught me to appreciate, love and value children and all human life, including all the school stakeholders. Love is the key to life and as a school head I have learnt to love the students like my own children. As a parent, I always want the best out of the students. I encourage all teachers to love the students, because when they look at us they expect us to love them. We spend more time with them than their parents do. When the students feel loved, appreciated and valued, they tend to work hard and make us proud as a school and as their teachers and parents. Love is also necessary in a school because it promotes a sense of belonging, and promotes the teamwork and family values that are necessary for students to operate in harmony.

Learning beyond the usual classroom

Our duty as a school and as parents is not only to raise children but also to help educate them so that they become self-sufficient in life. I initially told you that I wanted to be a farmer. I am someone who is sensitive when it comes to the environment and nature. We have the ozone layer that needs to be protected through the planting of trees, and if we cut down a tree, we need to replace it. As a school, we sometimes take trips into the community for National Tree Planting Day to teach people how to plant and transplant trees. As a school that supports the environment, we have also introduced horticulture as a compulsory subject for Form 1 and Form 2 students. We need our students to learn how to plant trees, how to grow fruits, how to transplant trees, how to graft different fruit trees like lemons and oranges, and how to grow vegetables to eat healthily and become self-sustainable, or for commercial purposes.

Teachers in schools are there to facilitate the growth of students, which includes providing them with enough information to choose their career paths and to decide what they want to become in life — a musician, entrepreneur, sportsperson or be employed in specific sectors of the economy. Students have hidden talents in music, sport and the arts, including painting, drama and poetry. As a school, we have introduced music and drama as subjects. We also try to emphasise that learning is not confined to the classroom setting and can take place anywhere. For example, it can take place on the sports field, in the

community, or at functions. Basically anywhere you get to know something you did not know before should be considered a learning process.

I am a Good Shepherd

As a Christian, I see my job as a teacher and school head as a calling beyond my job description. I am a Good Shepherd who is there to give life to students and guide them towards the greener pastures of life, beginning with being responsible citizens who respect life, respect other people's human rights, and give back to the community. I also take time to mould the morals and spiritual lives of the students. This is important, since it contributes to good discipline, morals, and ethically acceptable behaviours on the part of the students. The gospel I usually preach in school assemblies also inculcates a hardworking ethic in the students, because I preach that God blesses those who help themselves. When I talk of appreciating life, I always tell the students that their bodies are the temple of God. They need to respect their bodies and abstain from sex before marriage to avoid unwanted pregnancy and sexual diseases, including HIV and Aids. I always encourage them to focus on their studies, especially the girls, because I do not want them to drop out of school. I need them to have a better life. I also talk to and advise students on the use and abuse of drugs, especially in their adolescence. This is a confusing stage of their lives, where they can either destroy or build their lives depending on the choices they make.

A man who respects females

The words "It's a man's world" echo in education because there has been a vicious circle of gender stereotyping and bias that has been linked to men being dominant and better than women in most things in society, in the work place and in leadership. This is something we have agreed as a school to transform in order to promote gender equity, and that we promote with our stakeholders, especially the students, who are encouraged to respect each other regardless of their gender. In schools, when students choose their subjects we need to remove certain stereotypes and prejudices that cause certain subjects to be seen as "masculine" and others as "feminine". We need to encourage female

students to do the more scientific subjects such as mathematics, physics and chemistry, as well as the commercial subjects like accountancy, business studies and economics, all of which were stereotyped as predominantly "male" subjects. We need female students to be prepared for careers as engineers, doctors, pilots, lawyers, accountants and managers, which used to be seen as careers for men only. We also need men to respect women and see them as equals, because women are very important since they are the ones who give birth to humankind.

Our classrooms as centres of learning

In our school, we take pride in our classrooms being centres of learning. We have replaced broken furniture with new furniture, and replaced the chalkboards with modern, interactive whiteboards. We have also installed an Internet connection for the school so that teachers can access it any time to research information and share it with students, for example YouTube videos on particular topics being taught. We have introduced computers into the staff room so that teachers can prepare PowerPoint presentations to present their lessons more effectively in the classroom. We are ensuring that we provide our students with an education that is relevant to the current times. The use of computers also prepares our students for the tertiary or university studies, where most of the learning platform is digitised.

The man of many hats

A school head's professional conduct and image should be exemplary. Of importance to me is my smile that I wear as a school head, which is a symbol of welcome to the students, teachers, parents and all the other school stakeholders. The smile signals to everyone that they are welcome, and are free to perform their different roles and tasks, including participating in school activities. If a person is happy at work, they tend to perform better and achieve more. The opposite is also true, and unhappy workers are likely to fail to achieve their targets. As a school head I see myself as a referee at times in the school. I have to blow the whistle and stop certain people from doing certain things that are not acceptable at the school. I therefore regard the school as a sports field where there are

various players playing in different positions. I observe school activities accordingly as a referee. Sometimes teachers do not perform well and fail to produce good results. As the school head I need to call them in and warn them about the situation. This is like issuing a yellow card. As the referee, there are also moments when I need to issue a red card, especially to students who have to be suspended or expelled from the school for various reasons, which range from misconduct to sexual abuse and drug abuse. Above all, I am a man who is appreciated both at home and at work. At home, I am a father and husband, and I need to perform these roles to satisfy the needs of my family in the same way that I satisfy the needs of my staff members as the school head.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the re-storied narratives of Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow. The narratives were presented as research texts that were collaboratively written by both me and the school heads. I wrote the stories based on the narrative interviews, the artefact inquiry, the collage inquiry and the transect walks, and later presented the stories to the school heads to member check before publishing them. My narratives captured the early lives of the participants at the beginning of the research texts; their schooling and college lives characterised the middle section of the stories; and the final section of their stories covered their LFL experiences as teachers, managers and school heads. All these lived experiences were presented in a coherent manner to produce a good and believable story that anyone can read and understand.

It was interesting to note how the participants' characters and identities were shaped by key contributors in their lives: their families, their religion (mainly Christianity), certain key relationships, and their passions and interests (such as singing, helping others and sports). All the above constituted sources from which the school heads drew their meanings and understanding of their multiple identities — how they behave, how they relate to others or how they conduct themselves as individuals or within certain parts of their society, their institutions or their schools. Another key learning from the school heads' stories was their willingness and eagerness to transform themselves both personally and professionally, and to extend their world view through study, through learning from role models and through establishing a shared vision with others.

The school heads' lived experiences reflected their complex multiple identities that are constantly negotiated during interaction with people and through relationships constructed in their professional and personal lives. Being a Christian, for example, meant that one leads a kind of life that conforms to that social group, and sometimes the qualities of Christianity informed their professional way of life and leadership, a good example being Martyr. It was important to use these storied lives of the school heads in the first person to achieve a better understanding of how and why they lead learning successfully in their schools. The key learning communicated by the stories is that leadership qualities are not innate, but are developed, negotiated and transformed through experiences, and through relationships with others, both of a personal and a professional nature. More research needs to be conducted on school heads and other educational leaders for us to learn more qualities that could contribute to better LFL for all school stakeholders.

In the following chapter, the narratives of the four participants are subjected to further analysis — what I call the second level of analysis. The study framework discussed in section 2.5 underpins the write-up of the data: Rodgers and Scott's (2008) assumption of identity being "contextual, relational and emotional, shifting and multiple and storied"; Beauchamp and Thomas's (2009) assertion that teacher identity is composed of an intertwined personal and professional identity; and Hallinger's (2011) LLM.

CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVES: MEANINGS AND UNDERSTANDINGS THAT ZIMBABWEAN SCHOOL HEADS DRAW ON AS LEADERS FOR LEARNING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

My preceding chapter presented the initial analysis that comprised of the storied narratives of my research participants, namely Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow. Their storied narratives provided a glance into their lived personal and professional experiences as school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools, and addressed the first research question: "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" These narratives will now be subjected to the second level of analysis, which is explained in detail below

This chapter explores the meanings and understandings of self that the school heads draw on as leaders for learning. This second level of analysis unpacks my four storied narratives, and addresses the second research question: "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?" This question is analysed according to the theoretical framework for the study outlined in section 2.5. This framework incorporates Rodgers and Scott's (2008) theory of teacher identity as "contextual; relational and emotional; shifting and multiple; and storied" (see section 3.7.3), as well as Beauchamp and Thomas's (2011) understanding of teacher identity as fluid and continuously shaped by the personal and professional lives of the individuals. Using both these identity theories helped me to understand that the teacher's identity is informed by both their personal and professional lives, which are also influenced by their context. Their relationships with stakeholders and the emotions involved contribute to their personal and professional identity, and influence their behaviour accordingly. In addition, the school heads' identities are fluid, and cannot be reduced to one aspect, as their identities are informed by how they negotiate their various roles at various stages in and outside the school context. Teachers as human beings therefore lead a storied life that is inspired by their personal and professional past, present and future experiences.

This chapter makes explicit the personal and professional meanings and understandings of self that Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow constructed as leaders for learning. The chapter begins with a presentation of the personal identity of each participant. Personal identity is used as a reference to the self, as explained by Bothma, Lloyd and Khapova (2015), and answers the question, "Who am I?" Answers to this question provide information on a person's character, what they believe in and how their life has been shaped by their collective lived experiences (Cruess, Cruess, Boudreau, Snell & Steinert, 2015). Exploring the school heads' personal identities revealed their beliefs, values, motivations and aspirations as leaders for learning that are shaped by their life experiences. This concurs with Rodgers and Scott's (2008) findings that one's identity is dependent on the experiences one has had in the contexts in which one has found oneself. In addition, the school heads' personal identities also depended on the relationships they had had with their immediate family members or with people within the community. It was also influenced by the groups they had affiliated to while growing up and the roles they had assumed. All of these aspects can be storied through recounting the lived experiences.

I present the personal and professional meanings and understandings of self of each participant (Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow) simultaneously. Immediately after the discussion of their personal identity, the professional identity of each participant is analysed. This shows how their professional identities are shaped by their personal experiences and vice versa, and these two aspects are synthesised into a pantoum poem for each participant. The formation of an individual's personal and professional identities occurs simultaneously, as the two mutually influence each other (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011). According to Feen-Calligan (2005, p. 122), professional identity seems to answer the question, "Who have you become?", and is influenced by the "collective identity of a profession and an individual's own sense of the professional role". Considering the school heads' professional identities was necessary to show how their perceptions of their role and its associated characteristics, philosophies, principles, actions and behaviours stem from their personal identities as leaders for learning.

Each section provides a synthesis of the personal and professional identities of each participant. The synthesis is drawn from three key phrases mentioned by the participants in their research texts that express their personal and professional identities and their

understandings of self. I then combined these key phrases to form a pantoum poem. According to Sellers (2008, p. 3), "the pantoum poem is a poem of indefinite length made up of stanzas whose four lines are repeated in a pattern: lines 2 and 4 of each stanza are repeated as lines 1 and 3 of the next stanza, and so on". I used the pantoum poem to highlight key phrases that captured the school heads' meanings and understandings of self as leaders for learning. Thereafter, I present my interpretation of the poem, where I respond to two questions in relation to the poem: 1) What does the poem say about the participants' personal and professional meanings and understandings of self? 2) Why is it worth saying this?

5.2 SHINING STAR: A SACRIFICING AND ADVENTUROUS BEING

I first present Shining Star's personal meanings and understanding of self, followed by his professional meanings and understanding of self, and then a synthesis of the two into a pantoum poem that foregrounds his collective meanings and understandings as a leader for learning.

5.2.1 Personal meanings and understandings of self: A sacrificing individual

Below is a glimpse into Shining Star's personal meanings and understandings of self.

5.2.1.1 A caring first-born son

It has been a common trend for African men like Shining Star's father to migrate to towns from the rural areas to find work, leaving the family headship in the hands of the first-born son.

> *In the absence of my father, as the first born son, I assumed his role as the head of the family at an early age assisting my mother in the fields before going to primary school. I also took care of my younger siblings showering them with love, making them toys, teaching them language and manners and making decisions on*

their behalf and the rest of the family where possible, lessening the parenting burden on my mother.

African customs and traditions dictate that the male child automatically becomes the head of a household where the father is absent, which places the child in a position of influence that includes making family decisions. Mkhize (2006) asserts that children who head families are leaders, as they take charge, provide food and psychological support, and care for and make decisions on behalf of the younger siblings, who may accept their authority as the elder sibling. This concurs with Shining Star's experience, which may have given him valuable lessons in taking charge and caring for others from an early age. This resonates with the famous saying, "charity begins at home". Shining Star's identity as a carer and as the first born is relational and emotional, according to Rodgers and Scott (2008). Being the first born, Shining Star demonstrated caring behaviours and emotions towards his younger siblings and other members of the family, forming the basis of his personal meanings and understandings of self, and his way of life.

5.2.1.2 A learner who valued education

Shining Star grew up as a responsible young man who excelled in school while also working in the fields. This was as a result of his visionary mother, who inspired him to value education and the responsibility to work hard.

I grew up valuing education and excelling in school in as much as I did house chores and worked in the fields because of my visionary mother who always communicated high educational expectations to me. She inspired me to multitask as it was very difficult to adjust to this routine of working in the fields before going to school. She used to motivate me, telling me this was preparing me to become a responsible man in future who will be able to provide for his family. I also learnt from her to inspire and motivate others, as she was my role model growing up.

Shining Star's visionary mother inspired him to be a responsible man who in turn inspires and motivates others. Zenger, Folkman and Edinger (2011) point out that individuals who are able to inspire others are distinguished, as they can influence others to achieve remarkable outcomes. Shining Star grew up as an inspired and motivated individual who

later became an excellent example of what he wants others to do and become, as noted below when he volunteered to become a mentor. Shining Star's experience is supported by Gee's (2001) observation that identity is shaped by the school or family environment in which one is located.

5.2.1.3 A volunteer student mentor in English

Empirical evidence supports the contribution of volunteer mentors in improving the academic achievement of weaker students in schools (Colvin & Ashman, 2010). During his secondary school education, Shining Star volunteered to help other students in English, thereby contributing positively to their academic achievement.

> *As a senior enthusiastic and passionate English student, I volunteered to mentor students during my spare time, helping them to read and understand the language with the aim of improving their academic achievements. Leading the groups of mentees made me feel special and distinguished. I had to work extra hard to maintain the new elite status of a volunteer mentor where other junior students had to look up to me as a senior brother and role model.*

Shining Star as a student mentor modelled care and sacrifice in order to help others develop and succeed in life. Wilson (2012) views volunteering as an opportunity to project a caring and compassionate attitude toward others. This may explain Shining Star's approach to volunteering. Shining Star enacted multiple identities during his schooling: he was 1) a boy, 2) a student, 3) a volunteer, and 4) a mentor. This illustrates Rodgers and Scott's (2008, p. 735) observation that "within multiple contexts one forms multiple relationships, and brings forth multiple aspects of oneself".

As a school student, Shining Star assumed these roles based on the relationships he developed with the students. In addition, his passion and enthusiasm for English as a subject inspired the emotional connection he had with other students, and how he ultimately became their role model. This is in line with Hargreaves' (2001) and Winograd's (2003) emphasis on the importance of emotions in contributing to identity development. Furthermore, Shining Star's ability to form, nurture and maintain relationships is supported by Bass (1999), who asserts that interpersonal skills include

compassion, social skills and tact, which are important in predicting influence, control and power over others. These interpersonal skills are key for individuals with the potential to lead, and are what Shining Star draws on to inform his personal meanings and understandings of self as he leads his everyday life.

Shining Star's personal meanings and understandings of self emphasise that he is naturally caring, a quality he exhibited at an early age when he headed the family in the absence of his father. This personal identity developed due to the relationships he had with his siblings and with other students, in contexts where he took care of his family and the academic needs of others as a volunteer mentor. Valuing education was a quality that assisted him in negotiating various identities as an individual, and that led to his having multiple identities, such as being a role model and a mentor (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). Finally, Shining Star models acceptable behaviours by being exemplary. He later used the meanings and understandings of self that informed his early personal life to inform his professional life as a teacher.

5.2.2 Professional meanings and understandings of self: An adventurous teacher

Below is a glimpse into Shining Star's professional meanings and understandings of self.

5.2.2.1 An innovative mathematics teacher

Mathematics researchers agree that children often perceive the subject as irrelevant, uninteresting, unrewarding and difficult. Owing to these perceptions, the chance of children skipping classes is high (Lepper, 1988; Singh, Granville & Dika, 2002). In order to inculcate a positive attitude towards mathematics, Shining Star as a novice teacher inspired the mathematics students. He used his personal money to create a reward system of chocolates and sweets for acceptable behaviours. This became a successful way of improving the students' attitudes and class attendance at his first school.

> *As a passionate young teacher, I was disturbed by the poor student attitudes and poor class attendance at the school. To improve this, I made my lessons fun by encouraging the students to actively participate, igniting their passion for the*

subject. I also motivated and rewarded them with sweets and chocolates as a means of incentivising attendance and participation in my class, until attendance was almost 100%.

Shining Star's passion for mathematics and teaching ignited his innovation as a teacher, and he fostered a more fun and interesting learning environment, thereby improving student attendance and interest in the subject. According to Goldstein (2012), teachers as leaders should have such key qualities of passion, purpose and commitment in order to be able to stimulate the will to succeed in students. In addition, Moberly, Waddle and Duff (2005, p. 363) affirm that "98% of the teachers use extrinsic reward such as points, candy, sweets and prizes as incentives meant to improve students' attendance, classroom participation and achievement". To summarise, innovative teachers as leaders are a continuous driving force that brings change for the better in the classroom through challenging the status quo that underpins what is not working and changing it for the better (Zenger et al., 2011). Shining Star's personal meanings and understanding of care and sacrifice are evident in his professional life as a teacher, as was willing to sacrifice his own money to ignite passion in his mathematics students as a caring teacher. This corresponds with the relational and emotional aspects of teacher identity proposed by Rodgers and Scott (2008), and shows that teachers' personal identities are intertwined with their professional identities when they execute their jobs.

As a school head, Shining Star has inspired stakeholders to continue learning. He graduated at the age of fifty, which stood out as an example of the importance of a culture of continuous learning. Saphier and King (1985, p. 17) contend that school heads are responsible for "protecting what is important" in schools. They are seen to do this through modeling acceptable values, which create a healthy learning environment for all school stakeholders. Shining Star's modeling of the culture of learning for all stakeholders is a key element of his leadership in a successful school.

I graduated with this degree at the age of 50 years, and have been a source of inspiration to many people in my school to continue learning. I wanted to show my children, the students, the staff members and other stakeholders that learning does not end and age does not matter. Your will matters most of all, if you want to be a learner.

Shining Star is a lifelong learner who values continued learning as a necessary activity for all stakeholders if student academic performance is to be improved. The literature suggests that today's schools are seen as professional learning communities (DuFour, DuFour & Eaker, 2008). Accordingly, for today's schools to succeed, they need to promote a culture of learning for all stakeholders aimed at influencing student academic performance positively. Drawing from his personal meanings and understandings of self related to excellence and hard work mentioned earlier, Shining Star leads by example. He also believes that through learning he can reinvent himself, which is part of his professional teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The process of continuous learning and development for Shining Star as a teacher and school head is also in line with Rodgers and Scott's (2008) finding that the identities of teachers and school heads are shifting and multiple, and include the identity of being a learner, which should be negotiated and be part of their everyday lives.

5.2.2.2 A risk-taking teacher

Leaders are confronted with risks in their everyday lives. These risks may be in the form of new challenges that push them out of their comfort zones, and may involve a willingness to place themselves at great personal risk by going beyond the boundaries of their prescribed duties (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). As a new school head, Shining Star confronted the problem of illegal drugs in the school, even though it put him at great personal risk to do so, in order to restore a healthy learning environment:

> *The students smoked marijuana freely, resulting in them being very disrespectful and rude towards the teachers, who became afraid of them. None of the teachers dared or were willing to risk their lives to confront this drug abuse issue to create a better school. I was willing to risk my life for a better school by confronting the problem of students abusing dagga. I knew I could not win this battle alone. Hence, I used my interpersonal skills — being approachable, listening and incorporating stakeholders — to form strong relationships and to put together a team to come up with solutions for a better school. As a united front, and by including the police, we identified and eliminated the source of drugs (which was*

the people in the surrounding villages) and a healthy learning environment was restored.

Shining Star risked his life in taking the initiative to deal with the drug problem in his school, and was able to successfully restore order in the school with the cooperation of most of the school stakeholders. In doing so, he shared his vision for a healthier learning environment and a better school, and achieved this vision with the help of the students, community members and the police. Informed by his personal meanings and understandings of self (characterised by a sense of responsibility, an ability to take charge and the pursuit of excellence), Shining Star utilised his interpersonal skills to create a better school with the help of most of the stakeholders. The importance of the interpersonal relationships among stakeholders was therefore key to facilitating a better school (Kitching, 2010). In addition, Thapa, Cohen, Higgins-D'Alessandro and Gaffey (2012) note that school transformation aimed at improving behavioural, academic and mental health outcomes for students is possible if all stakeholders work together for the betterment of their school. Shining Star's willingness to take risks and go beyond the call of duty shows the complexity of his identity as a teacher, and shows that he becomes a particular kind of person in a particular context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In this context Shining Star was a risk taker, which shows that the school heads' identities are contextual and shifting, as noted by Rodgers and Scott (2008). This also shows that leading learning is a highly negotiated role that requires school heads to be contextual or situational in their behaviours, rather than prescriptive.

5.2.2.3 A technologically pioneering and innovative teacher

In order to meet the current technology needs of the students, Shining Star initiated the upgrade of the school library into a paperless digital library.

I initiated the upgrade of our library into a modern digital library, which is now one of its kind in the province. It comprises of a paperless work station that is accessible 24/7 by both teachers and students as long as Wi-Fi (wireless local area networking) is available and the computers are fully functional, but users can also use tablets and their cell phones to access reading materials. The library has been of benefit to everyone, and has enhanced the learning of both teachers

and students, therefore improving academic performance. It does not restrict users to books only, but extends their educational information search to other educational sources such as journals, Internet sources and videos on YouTube.

By adopting technology earlier than other school heads, Shining Star aimed to influence teaching and learning positively through the creation of a digital library relevant to the current students' needs. This concurs with Xaba (2012), who notes that heads of schools also act as facilities managers who are responsible for all key developments or upgrades of the school infrastructure, which they have to initiate themselves. In addition, Fullan (2001) identifies constructive change to academic structures and facilities, such as the development of the digital library in the school, as a key element in generating a positive impact that shapes and enhances both teacher practices and student learning. In developing educational support structures such as the digital library, Shining Star exhibits creative behaviours that are risk-taking and innovative. This is in line with Beauchamp and Thomas's (2009) observation that the identity of a teacher determines how he or she acts and behaves, and what he or she chooses to advocate, both at home and at the school. School heads should therefore remain up to date and informed on modern methods of teaching and learning, and on technological resources, which they need to blend with the existing provision of education in their schools. Such informed innovation on the part of school heads is needed for students to succeed in today's fast-changing school environment (Fernández-Mesa, Llopis Córcoles, García-Granero & Alegre-Vidal, 2013).

Professionally, Shining Star is driven by a passion for assisting others, which stems from his personal background of caring for others, valuing education and leading as a role model, which ignites his will to learn and inspires other stakeholders to become lifelong learners. This underlines the importance of relationships and emotions in both the personal and professional lives of teachers (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Shining Star's professional sense of caring and responsibility is informed by his personal meanings and understandings of caring, as shown when he risked his life for a better, drug-free school environment that enhanced the provision of quality education. Innovation is also a key aspect of Shining Star's educational vision for a better school. Shining Star's multiple, shifting identities therefore respond to his context or environment (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Professionally, he incorporates fun elements into learning by engaging students through the use of incentives and through more advanced technologies and

resources. Shining Star's leadership style in executing his duties as the school head also shows the importance of negotiation.

5.2.3 A synthesis of Shining Star's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

The pantoum poem below, titled "Your will matters", is a synthesis of Shining Star's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self. The poem incorporates key phrases found in his narrative that show evidence of his lived experiences. Of the six chosen phrases, three are drawn from his personal meanings and understandings of self, and three from his professional meanings and understandings of self, with the most powerful of them functioning as the poem's title.

Your will matters
A better school
A responsible man
Passionate
Risk taker

A responsible man
Make lessons fun
Risk taker
Your will matters

Make lessons fun
Passionate
Your will matters
A better school

5.2.4 Shining Star's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

Shining Star is an intrinsically motivated individual whose personal will drives him to excel as a school head. De Klerk (2001) discusses Frankl's theory of personal will, which emphasises that people have freedom of personal will and can choose their actions, attitudes and desires (the primary motivating forces in their lives) in order to find and create meaning in their lives. In addition, Leiter (2009) explains that people's will commands a strong desire and determination inside of them to persist and excel in life, which allows them to accomplish difficult things. As a responsible person, Shining Star took care of his family, and provided for and cared for them. This personal sense of responsibility is what drove him to care about other students' social and academic performance, and what led him to volunteer to mentor them, thereby sacrificing his time and energy for the benefit of others. In a similar way, and in his professional capacity, he chose to protect the school learning environment from drug abuse. Shining Star created a better school by risking his life to ensure a safer learning environment. This promoted a culture of learning aimed at academic improvement.

A synonym for "will" is "passion", and as a passionate individual, Shining Star ignites and inspires a passion for learning in all the school stakeholders. As the school head he chose to further his studies, in the process modeling lifelong learning to all the stakeholders. He also believes in making lessons fun for students by igniting passion, in order to enhance their engagement, their understanding and hence their academic achievement. Passion has the ability to unlock one's potential, as one is doing what one loves, and the opposite is true for dull learning, which kills both passion and creativity and produces a negative impact on academic performance. Being passionate also means loving what one does. Shining Star loves students and learning, and cares for students' wellbeing, which motivates him to create a teaching and learning environment in which meaningful social and academic learning can take place. His care, which is a product of his passion, was evident when he willingly put his life on the line for a better school. Moreso, Kirriemuir and McFarlane (2004) assert that children should enjoy learning. Similarly, Shining Star believes that fun and enjoyable learning is key for successful education. His positive outlook motivated him to establish the only digital library in the province, which has modernised learning in the school. Davies and Brighouse (2010)

affirm that in schools, passionate individuals who strive to make a difference and who challenge the status quo can improve student learning and academic performance. Shining Star's pantoum poem highlights the personal and professional characteristics and behaviours that he used to achieve success as a teacher and a school head (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

5.2.5 Lessons from Shining Star's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

In any school, the school head is responsible for any activities that take place, especially in relation to learning and academic results (Lyons, 2010), and must make informed, creative and responsible decisions on behalf of the school. It is the responsibility of the head of school to positively influence student performance and the contribution of the teachers (Goode, 2017). One key lesson from Shining Star was that his passion drove him to care for the other stakeholders, for the learning environment, and for an overall high standard of school performance, rather than for himself as an individual. Shining Star's passion was a key resource in the human capital development of all the stakeholders (students, teachers and parents), that he modeled passion and enthusiasm as both a learner and a leader of the school. He aspired for all stakeholders to be passionate about everything they do, both in and outside the school environment, as passion motivates individuals to excel and to pursue their vision of and belief in a better school. Chikoko, Naicker and Mthiyane (2015) identify the passion of the school head and of other stakeholders as a useful asset for promoting learning in the context of under-resourced schools. This can equate to a style of servant leadership, which Shining Star exhibited. School heads should be prepared to serve all stakeholders passionately and protect what the school is designated for: learning for all stakeholders that translates into high academic achievement and whole-child development.

In addition, risk taking, in the innovative, entrepreneurial sense, should be employed by school heads, since they are responsible for modeling acceptable behaviours and values as standards, a suggestion widely accepted in the school leadership literature (Price, 2012). This is supported by Belle (2018), who states that the school heads' task is to challenge the status quo positively in order to influence stakeholders to introduce

constructive changes to the school climate and learning culture. Shining Star demonstrates such entrepreneurial qualities, especially risk taking. He challenged the status quo that was characterised by a lack of student discipline and the mistreatment of teachers by students who took illegal drugs on the school premises. School heads should become social entrepreneurs who are able to pioneer a potentially unpopular vision until all stakeholders buy into it, in order to maximise social value in schools (Dees, 2017). This type of leadership is advocated by Allen, Grigsby and Peters (2015) as key for the process of successful school improvement.

Instructional leadership is also key for successful and meaningful teaching and learning, when it stimulates learners' interest, curiosity and creativity by providing technological complements to curriculum implementation. Instructional care also requires school heads to provide learning incentives to students, so that they are motivated to improve their academic performance. This concurs with Hallinger and Murphy's (1986) description of instructional leadership as the founding leadership model in understanding effective schools. As a school head, Shining Star went the extra mile to support teaching and learning in various ways. He made lessons fun and technologically relevant to the current generation of students. He created the first digital library in the province in a bid to modernise teaching and learning, and to make it more interactive, fun and interesting. Shining Star is an example of caring LFL, or instructional care, that factors in the students' emotions. Instructional care is an extension of the current literature on instructional leadership, which focuses on creating a healthy school climate to facilitate effective learning for all stakeholders (Belle, 2015; Manaseh, 2016). In creating a healthy school climate, school heads need to become instructional carers like Shining Star, who made learning fun through adopting technological innovations to implement the curriculum. As shown by Shantal, Halttunen and Pekka (2014), school heads should create a technology-rich environment, should encourage the use of interactive teaching techniques, such as interactive white boards, and should use social media to increase the learners' interest in their learning.

5.3 MARTYR: A CULTURED AND MINDFUL BEING

I first present Martyr's personal meanings and understandings of self, followed by her professional meanings and understandings of self, and then a synthesis of the two into a pantoum poem that foregrounds her collective meanings and understandings as a leader for learning.

5.3.1 Personal meanings and understandings of self: A cultured woman

Below is a glimpse into Martyr's personal meanings and understandings of self.

5.3.1.1 A girl child growing up in a patriarchal family

Martyr's father was significantly influential in her development as a child. As a policeman, he led his family in an exemplary manner and because he did so, Martyr saw him as a role model. The importance of the father's role in the family, and in particular their role in the development of their children, has been emphasised in social science research in the past few decades (Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). Martyr described her father's role as follows:

> *From my father, I learnt to appreciate protocol and order, and to be an organised person from an early age. My father was my role model; he was a really organised person, who led the family in an exemplary way. As a family, we knew who to approach if there were issues we needed to discuss. We would approach my mother, and then she would approach my father. Protocol had to be observed for peace and harmony to prevail in our family.*

According to Rosenberg and Wilcox (2006), fathers provide clues on how to respond to real-life situations, such as expressing grievances through the right channels. These are principles that are important in preparing a child to be a responsible citizen who is fit for the world of work. The family was the context from which Martyr drew her meanings and understandings of the importance of order, organisation and protocol. Martyr's family influenced her in many ways, in line with Rodgers and Scott's (2008, p. 734) observation

that in the family, "there exists a set of norms, and it is expected that these norms will be upheld by the participants within the given community". In addition to her important relationship with her father, growing up Martyr had a special relationship with her eldest sister, who also became her role model. Research indicates that family members contribute both positively and negatively to one another's growth, especially in terms of character and behaviour. Siblings can act as companions and assume key roles, such as parenting in the absence of the parents (McHale, Kim & Whiteman, 2006).

> *I learnt to take responsibility for my younger sister in the same way, and I looked up to my eldest sister, who was loving, caring, nurturing and always there for us. Later when she became a teacher, I also admired how she supported us financially by paying our school fees while also being able to afford to provide for her own family. This made me to aspire to be a teacher.*

Martyr learnt from her sister the values of compassion, loving, caring and nurturing, which she seems to emulate. These values may have positively influenced her development as a child, and form the basis of her meanings and understandings of self when relating to others. The importance of relationships in identity formation is emphasised by Rodgers and Scott (2008), as a person is constructed in particular ways by others. In addition, gender-appropriate behaviours are learnt through observation (Bandura, 1977). Martyr learnt from and observed her elder sister, who was her role model, which was crucial in developing her feminine qualities later in life (Avolio, 2010).

5.3.1.2 A distinguished female church leader

As a youth, Martyr was very active in church and served as a secretary. Onifade (2010) identifies the following personal attributes of a secretary: adaptability, organisation, friendliness, good observation, intuitiveness, flexibility, good listening, and self-confidence. In addition, a secretary's professional attributes involve responsibility and secretarial skills.

> *As the youth church secretary, I learnt to take and read meeting minutes, create agendas, provide feedback and account for organisational activities. This helped*

me to develop self-confidence, including the ability to address large groups of people.

Martyr's position as secretary in the church helped her to develop leadership and management skills such as accountability and self-confidence, which are necessary when reporting, giving feedback and addressing people. Her role implies responsibility, as she would have been required to act in congruence with prescribed church secretarial roles (South African Council of Churches, 2017). These include being a manager of day-to-day activities and being the primary spokesperson who provides reports and feedback on activities to both the council and the public. Martyr's identity as a Christian is established by the context she immerses herself in, which is her Roman Catholic religious group (Gee, 2001). Being part of this religious group also requires her to live according to the Christian meanings and understandings of self that guide her both personally and professionally in life.

At college, Martyr earned herself the nickname 'Bishop' because she was elected as the Religious Representative Council member in the SRC. Drumm (2018) explains that in the Catholic Church, bishops are male ordained leaders who need to be inclusive and approachable, good communicators, and able to share decision making.

I grew up as a religious person and as an active member of the Catholic Church. At college, I was a choir leader, and was elected to the SRC, earning the name 'Bishop' even though I was a woman. As a Bishop, I was the middlewoman between the priest in charge and the rest of the college. During this time, I invited students to contribute their ideas for making our religious department more viable during my term. We introduced Christian camping trips, something that saw the enrolment of members increasing at the college.

Martyr is a religious individual who is inclusive and approachable, who acts as a "middlewoman" or intermediary, and who takes care of the spiritual lives of the students. Law (1993) notes that the power or authority that a leader has is based on the willingness of those who are being led to grant the leader authority over them. Martyr earned the nickname 'Bishop' because she had displayed character and capability in taking charge and effectively managing her religious portfolio and others.

Personally, Martyr is an individual who was raised in a close-knit religious family where strong relationships and ties were valued, and these form the basis of her meanings and understandings of self. She is spiritually grounded and has been actively involved in church choirs, and church roles and leadership positions, and therefore her meanings and understandings of self are religiously inclined. It is because of the influence of her family and the church that she is a well-organised person who values others and relates to them with care, love and nurturing. It could be argued that her personal identity is informed by patriarchal and gendered influences that encourage her to focus on "female" caring qualities and emotions. Rodgers and Scott (2008) describe how such influences can be influential in directing the beliefs, meanings and understandings that one lives by.

5.3.2 Professional meanings and understandings of self: A mindful teacher

Below is a glimpse into Martyr's professional meanings and understandings of self.

5.2.3.1 A teacher learning from political leaders

Martyr seems to have internalised the values of democracy and of servant leadership, which enable her to use her available resources to do great things with the help of others. She stated how she appreciated and valued the contributions of political icons like Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama, who is sometimes compared to the great South African icon and has been called "America's Mandela" (Kim & Du Pisani, 2013).

> *Obama's campaign slogan was "Yes we can", which inspired me to believe that "Yes I can" lead my school. I can make changes, and make a difference in my own leadership. In my little school, with whatever few resources I have, yes I can make a difference to the students' lives. In Africa, Mandela reminds me of the leadership he exercised, which was democratic and servant in nature. He was not autocratic but was instead there to listen and to bridge the gap between different ethnic groups in South Africa, to form the rainbow nation through emphasising a shared vision of a new South Africa.*

Martyr is a lifelong learner who learns from anyone who can make a positive contribution to her life, including political icons. According to Parankimalil (2014), learning is a lifelong process of acquiring the information, skills and attitudes necessary for survival. Martyr's act of giving her life to Christ corresponds with her spiritual and moral values as an active Christian leader, and is a critical part of her personal meanings and understandings of self. Her choice to become a teacher corresponds with the servant acts of Jesus Christ and Mandela, who put the people they were leading first through sacrificing their life and their freedom, respectively. This is defined by Laub (2010, p. 3) as servant leadership, "an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader". In line with Obama's "Yes we can" vision and slogan, Martyr strives to change her school for the better with the resources she has at her disposal. In addition, Martyr's professional identity development shows the power of stories in contributing to her identity as an individual and teacher. This resonates with the understanding of teacher identity as "a unique embodiment of his/her stories to live by, stories shaped by the landscapes past and present in which s/he lives and works" (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 4).

5.2.3.2 A genuine leader aware of her strengths and weaknesses

Duignan (2014, p. 206) notes that "authentic leaders are aware of their own limitations and strengths, are tolerant of imperfection in others, and help others learn, grow, mature, and succeed". Martyr is aware of her weaknesses and strengths, and this awareness helps her to become a better school head. She acknowledges how her failure to delegate due to her perfectionism is a weakness, but she is slowly learning to delegate each day, as she has come to realise how delegation benefits her and her subordinates in the school. This resonates with Hellriegel and Slocum's (1989) definition of delegation as an activity where subordinates assume their leader's role and responsibilities.

> *As an individual I have a problem with delegating because I fear that people might let me down. Delegating was not my cup of tea, but I have learnt over the years that it is not all about me but is rather about us as a team and a school. I have learnt to delegate but it did not come naturally.*

Martyr has learnt the importance of sharing responsibility through delegation as a means of transforming her individual weakness into a strength as a school head. She acknowledges that the success of the school does not lie only in her individual effort but rather is a collective effort. Understanding how her personal weaknesses could be transformed in her professional life to benefit the school raises the importance of teacher identity theory (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In reforming her professional practice, Martyr has had to challenge her old belief that "if you want something done right, you have to do it yourself" (Burke, 2006), since the increased complexity and diverse leadership roles necessitate delegation by school heads.

In relation to Martyr's strengths, she prides herself on her vision and her ability to organise resources in ways that maximise student achievement in the school. These qualities are affirmed by Drumm (2018), who notes that above all else, good leaders are visionary people who see further than others, who imagine possibilities and who recognise the potential in organisations and individuals, and accordingly inspire others to dream along with them.

> *One of my strengths is that I have a vision, which is the direction in which I want to see the school moving, and which I openly share with the other people around me. Another strength is that I am able to organise. I can organise any situation, even a difficult situation, and turn it into an opportunity for learning and growth.[…]*
>
> *As a school we have gone the extra mile to install a heated swimming pool, becoming one of the few schools to have one in the country. This swimming pool has brought a lot of success for the school. We have done extremely well in our league and have won trophies. The heated swimming pool has been an added advantage in getting our school to raise its standards, so we take a lot of pride in our swimming pool and the joy it has brought to the whole school. An important milestone and memory it brought was the school attaining first position after 10 years in our swimming league of elite schools in this province. For me this was the climax of my leadership, and I took pride in managing to build up a struggling swimming team with my teachers until it came first in a very competitive league, although it did not happen overnight.*

As a leader, Martyr is able to complement her vision with the ability to organize the available human and financial resources in ways that stimulate everyone to work towards a common goal and towards her vision until it becomes a reality. Her ability to organise comes through in her professional life as a school head, and is also one of her personal strengths. Her identity as a teacher and a school head therefore represents a balance of personal and professional elements (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). A Bible verse, Proverbs 29 verse 18, reads: "Where there is no vision, people perish." This highlights vision as central to any type of leadership, both in and outside of the school context. School heads should have a personal vision that informs a professional, shared school vision as they are the most influential person in directing the school towards success or failure.

5.2.3.3 Building a family

Martyr believes in a life-giving school that is aimed at whole-child learning grounded on *Veritas* as a key value. Knapp, Copland and Talbert (2003) state that student learning ought to be broad, and should include spirituality, morality, music, sport and academics. Martyr views a school as a fountain of knowledge, where teachers and all stakeholders, including school heads, are life givers who are there to educate children.

> *Our students come from different family backgrounds. Some come from happy families, while others are being raised by single parents who are struggling. Yet others are from child-headed families, but happy families create happy students. This is what I have noticed in our school. We cater for students who come from broken families and try to build a family life for them in the school so that they do not feel lost or left out. […]*
>
> *Teaching to me is a life-giving activity and this is my vision of our school. As a life-giving school we are building young lives by giving students a lifetime, whole-child education that focuses on academic performance, on cultural aspects such as dance, music, art and drama, and on moral education. The education provided also includes general and non-traditional sports, such as swimming, and a spiritual grounding that teaches young people to think critically and equip them to become contributing members of the community. A holistic, life-giving school not*

> *only focuses on teaching and learning that involves grades or marks, but also focuses on the development of all aspects of growth of the students.*

Martyr's shared vision of a life-giving school seeks to educate the whole child and to focus on student welfare, which accommodates those students who come from broken families. It also seeks to develop responsible citizens who are grounded in every way — academically, spiritually, socially and in sports. This resonates with Thomas and Beauchamp (2011, p. 1), who note that

> in a rapidly transforming global society, school heads, regardless of the country in which they work, are experimenting with their roles and recreating their professional identities in relation to the contexts that surround them, contexts that are shifting, sometimes in unexpected ways.

Martyr has realised the need to enhance students' academic learning by caring for their other needs, such as love and affection, a healthy environment, safety and nutritious food. She realises that if these needs are not met, the students' learning will be affected. School heads who show such caring demonstrate a particular way of leading learning that is informed by personal feelings or identity (O'Connor, 2007). Martyr, through a caring personal and professional identity, envisions a life-giving school that offers students the opportunity to practise academic, moral, spiritual, cultural and social ways of being within their environment, and that better prepares them for the complex demands of modern life.

5.2.3.4 A Christian teacher who prides herself on speaking the truth

According to Hodgkinson (1991, p. 17), education is "a pursuit of the verities (truth, beauty, goodness, justice, happiness, self-fulfilment) … that is to say its aim is aesthetic". One key principle that Martyr believes is key to a successful life-giving school is the truth, which she explains as *Veritas*, the motto of the school at which she has taught for the past 21 years:

> *The school motto on the logo is "Veritas", which means "truth", which is my way of life both in and outside of my school environment. Christianity encourages me to link this to the gospel truth, which is unchallenged, and which emphasises the*

> *values of honesty, trustworthiness, authenticity and humility. I stand for the truth and I would die for the truth, but sometimes I have found out that people do not always take pride in saying the truth. In this school, I ask teachers to speak the truth in their teaching and the way they carry themselves, in the documents they write, in their preparation and marking of exams, and in giving relevant feedback to students.*

Martyr seems to believe that truth is a prerequisite value for a productive school culture, as it ensures that all stakeholders are accountable, and facilitates fair and appropriate feedback aimed at improvement. The value of truth is informed by her religious personal meanings and understandings of self, which seem prevalent in her professional life as a school head. Duignan (2014) view the values of honesty, truth and spirituality as ingredients for a successful school. If school teachers are truthful, for example, they are more likely to mark students' work fairly, and give appropriate feedback on time aimed at both teacher and student improvement (Wiggins, 2010). Although teachers in a school should operate according to their professional identity, as noted by Thomas and Beauchamp (2011), Martyr's personal Christian identity as someone who stands for the truth is also visible in how she conducts herself as a leader for learning. This shows how a school head's personal and professional identities can intertwine in complex ways that can influence their LFL practices.

Martyr's professional identity is informed by her Christian religion, which is an aspect of her personal life that guides her moral compass, especially when it comes to standing for the truth and being true to herself. This makes her an authentic individual who is willing to learn from her mistakes and from other leaders beyond the school environment, which is key in the reinvention and reformation of a teacher's professional identity (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011). Martyr's strong family values encourage her to see a school as a life giving space where education should be holistic and should include caring for those students who come from broken families. The caring and emotions evident in Martyr's professional life as a leader for learning show how the identity of a school head can be influenced by emotions and relationships.

5.3.3 A synthesis of Martyr's personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

The pantoum poem below, titled "Not all about me", is a synthesis of Martyr's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self. The poem incorporates key phrases found in her narrative that show evidence of her lived experiences. Of the six chosen phrases, three are drawn from her personal meanings and understandings of self, and three from her professional meanings and understandings of self, with the most powerful of them functioning as the poem's title.

Not all about me
Family school
The negotiator
Loving, caring and nurturing
Self-confidence

The negotiator
Spiritual
Loving, caring and nurturing
Not all about me

Spiritual
Self-confidence
Not all about me
Family school

5.3.4 Martyr's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

Martyr is a self-confident individual whose strengths are her confidence, her organisational skills, and her interpersonal communication skills, which she acquired as a youth church secretary and negotiator at college. For my study, I view Martyr as a negotiator, as she communicates and shares her vision of a family school. As a woman, she is able to give life through giving birth, and she applies a similar perspective to her work, as she believes that she can also give life through education. Her vision of a family school is guided by her maternal characteristics of loving, caring and nurturing to create a family community based on her spiritual values and truth. She acknowledges the need to harness all the stakeholders' potential in order to achieve her vision of a family school, through promoting the values of democracy and shared leadership, as she believes that the school is not all about her but is about all the stakeholders. According to Northouse (2007), self-confidence is an important characteristic for any individual, as it enables one to adequately cope with people, situations and events. It also puts one in a position to exercise autonomy (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Martyr's self-confidence was outstanding and was in contradiction to certain dominant narratives on women, who are stereotyped as submissive, highly emotional, weak and unfit for governance (Mestry & Schmidt, 2012). Sarsons and Xu (2015) state that, in general, women have less confidence than men. However, Martyr has a great deal of confidence as a woman, and has been a spiritual leader who has occupied important positions, as the youth church secretary and as an SRC representative in college, where she earned her the nickname 'Bishop'. Coffman (2014) suggests that women are hesitant to share their ideas with their colleagues in the workplace. However, this sign of a confidence gap between men and women does not apply to Martyr, as she communicates and shares her vision of a life-giving school. Manyonganise (2015) asserts that gender expectations in most societies construct women's role as the primary caregivers who are responsible for loving and nurturing children and the family, for building relationships, and for maintaining the family. These qualities are central to Martyr's identity as a school head.

5.3.5 Lessons from Martyr's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

A leader's values and beliefs are reflected in his or her vision. A vision is "a mental image of a possible and desirable future of the organisation" (Lyerly & Maxey, 2000, p. 48), and is essential in any organisation to empower, develop, care for and inspire others (Maldonado, 2015). The school head's vision should align with the main reason for schools' existence, and his or her primary responsibility should therefore be to facilitate the learning of all stakeholders (McCarley, Peters & Decman, 2016). Martyr's vision of a holistic, life-giving school extends the existing literature on student learning. Her vision captures the existence of schools beyond their academic purpose, and rather focuses on a holistic life education that aims to prepare students for the future through incorporating other aspects of learning, such as social, emotional, physical, spiritual and cultural. Such an approach is supported by Ng et al. (2015), who view the need to holistically educate students as the basis on which school heads should focus their leadership.

Both female and male leaders need self-confidence in order to communicate the school vision and mission in a way that inspires others to buy into their vision, as leadership is not only about them, but is rather a collective effort. School heads should also be inspirational as leaders through modelling acceptable behaviours (Pounder, 2008). Being spiritual was an important aspect of both Martyr's personal and professional identity. School heads do not necessarily need be religious; however, spirituality has been shown to contribute positively to Martyr's leadership practices in many ways, due to the values and beliefs she upholds and foregrounds. Chisanga and Naicker (2017) assert that Christian leaders practise servant leadership, as informed by the greater teacher Jesus Christ, who practised leadership that demonstrated care for others, empathy, truth, righteousness and kindness. Informed by her religious and spiritual beliefs, Martyr stands firmly for truth, which underpins a set of personal and professional ethics and behaviours in the teaching field. Martyr advocates a type of pedagogical truth that protects students' rights to fair and quality education, and which should be emulated by other school heads.

In many schools, the heads display paternal/maternal characteristics of leadership, such as being a guardian or nurturer of all stakeholders (Farh & Cheng, 2000; Tan & Dimmock, 2014). Therefore, at the core of school leadership are social relationships that promote a healthy school environment where everyone feels loved and valued (Louis, Murphy &

Smylie, 2016). Martyr's successful leadership based on caring, personal and social relationships with stakeholders, suggests that school heads, regardless of their gender, need to be caring, nurturing and loving to create a life-giving school community. In a recent empirical study, Zulu (2017) identifies caring as the most important ingredient in achieving successful student performance, since successful leadership is impossible without a caring leader. The creation of a caring school climate and community by school heads is an act of servant leadership that unlocks the potential of all school stakeholders, and is necessary for school success. This can be done through fostering openness, transparency, authenticity and genuineness, and through encouraging shared leadership and ownership of the school by all stakeholders.

5.4 CHAMELEON: A TRADITIONAL AND RELATIONAL BEING

I first present Chameleon's personal meanings and understandings of self, followed by his professional meanings and understandings of self, and then a synthesis of the two into a pantoum poem that foregrounds his collective meanings and understandings as a leader for learning.

5.4.1 Personal meanings and understandings of self: A traditional individual

Below is a glimpse into Chameleon's personal meanings and understandings of self.

5.4.1.1 Boyhood experiences of *dare*

Chameleon grew up in a rural area and from an early age his father took him to the *dare*, a community meeting place. Inclusion and participation are key elements of African traditional leadership. This is a model of leadership where the headman in the villages in Africa gather with trusted counsellors (usually elders known to have wisdom) and listen to the assembled people to make informed decisions (Mgayi, 2012).

> *At the dare, leadership is based on collective wisdom and on utilising the experience of the elders, who are the custodians of our moral and ethical values.*

> *This experience taught me how people should relate to others; people should discuss issues, and deliberate on the different issues that may arise in our community.*

Chameleon's experiences of the *dare* have socialised him to listen to other people's views before he can confidently make a decision. In this way, he is able to acknowledge the importance of collective wisdom in decision making as part of his meanings and understandings of self. Chameleon's story is in line with Sewdass's (2014) argument that African knowledge, albeit unstated, is entrenched in the practice of certain activities such as the *dare*, and also in experiences, which are passed on through involving children from an early age in communal wisdom and knowledge. Beijaard, Verloop and Vermunt (2000, p. 25) concur, noting that "personal and professional identity formation is conceived as an ongoing process that involves the interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences as one lives through them". Chameleon was exposed to the communal system of decision making by his father at an early age, which informs how he practices and views leadership personally and professionally.

5.4.1.2 As a boy child my father was my role model and mentor

According to Kniveton (2004), parents play a huge role in influencing the career choices of their sons and daughters. This is often shown in parents' tendency to support particular careers choices for children that mirror their own. This process is articulated in frequently used phrases such as "like father, like son" or "a chip off the old block". In my own Shona language, this phrase translates into the well-known proverb, *"mhembwe rudzi inozvara mwana ane zhumu"*. Chameleon's father was a teacher, and he influenced Chameleon to become a teacher like him. In this respect, he was a role model and mentor for Chameleon.

> *My hardworking father was my mentor and role model. He had a die-hard attitude that he learnt from my grandfather, who was also a teacher. He discouraged me from training as an agricultural demonstrator, as he wanted me to become a teacher like him. […] My father was a visionary man who inspired me, especially in terms of how he tackled issues. He emphasised being humble, and the importance of listening to others so that you can incorporate their different views and ways of doing things to become a better person.*

Chameleon is humble, flexible and listens to other people's views and ideas, which he incorporates into his own thinking in order to make informed decisions. These are values he learnt from his father, and this indicates that identity can be relational or learned from key people and relationships in one's life. This aligns with Rodgers and Scott's (2008, p. 21) claim that a person's identity is developed in relation to others and to the community in which one lives, "through engagement with others in cultural practice", like Chameleon's father-and-son engagement. Likewise, Jungen (2008) explains that fathers act as good role models and mentors, especially when they have a strong character and values, such as a strong work ethic. Their character and values greatly influence the development of their children into independent adults. Chameleon's father as his role model encouraged him to conduct himself in an acceptable manner as an individual. Their relationship gave Chameleon strong values and beliefs which inform his personal meanings and understandings of self, and his personal and professional identity.

5.4.1.3 A decision maker as a college student

Attending college has a profound impact on a young person's life, particularly those who were involved in leadership (Astin & Antonio, 2004). Chameleon assumed a leadership role at college as a student representative for accommodation:

> *At Bidvest Teachers College I was elected to become a student representative for student accommodation matters after I stood up against the administration on accommodation issues that the interim representatives were afraid to raise. All the matters that concerned students in the residence were reported to me, and I used to make decisions where possible.*

Chameleon's ability to assume responsibility and authority may have been influenced by his role as a student leader for accommodation at college. In that role, he learnt how to exercise autonomy and authority, and how to make decisions within his jurisdiction. His meanings and understandings of how to lead and take charge are informed by his position as a student activist. This corresponds with Rodgers and Scott's (2008, p. 734) assertion that "identity is dependent upon the contexts in which we immerse ourselves: schools, teacher education programs, study groups, family, religious groups, political parties and so forth". It was in college that Chameleon also learnt how to represent students' interests,

and where he put his life on the line for others in an act of care and sacrifice. Chameleon's democratic and participatory style of leadership is endorsed by Holdsworth (2000, p. 358), who supports student participation and leadership that involves a spectrum of student voices, where young people are able to "speak out" and to "share decision making and implementation of action". Chameleon's college experiences developed his ability to lead others during his youth, which prepared him for prospective similar roles in future.

Growing up in a rural village contributed to Chameleon's personal identity, and highlights the valuable contribution that context makes to meanings and understandings of self in relation to personal identity. Chameleon values the sort of collectivism that makes life function more smoothly for rural people, whether the collectivism relates to working in the fields, leadership or decision making. He takes after his father, who instilled *hunhu* values that emphasise the importance of human interaction and ethics, and that foreground relationships as key for the development of values, beliefs, meanings, understandings and identity (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Chameleon is an open person who stands up for himself and for others, and who believes in doing what is good for the maximum benefit of everyone. Chameleon's story shows the importance of context in identity formation.

5.4.2 Professional meanings and understandings of self: A relational teacher

Below is a glimpse into Chameleon's professional meanings and understandings of self.

5.4.2.1 A school head who incorporates input from other stakeholders

Schools can achieve excellence through the productive and effective use of their human resources. Forming strong teams is necessary for every school member to work positively towards a set vision and goals (Samson & Challis, 2002). Chameleon's leadership in his school focuses on the importance of collectively getting things done.

> *I cannot do everything as a school head. The teachers, students and supporting staff — all of us — play a part. I regard leadership as being built by different stakeholders marrying their input together to realise their potential and to enable*

the vision of the school to be achieved. We try to sail as a team. I believe the Secretary's Bell award was the result of such teamwork. […]

I value collective effort over individual talent and effort.

Chameleon acknowledges that he is part of a team where collective effort and teamwork are valued and result in optimal achievement. Chameleon assumes the different identities of being a team member, a team leader and a school head, and each identity calls for him to negotiate different meanings and understanding as a leader for learning. This is in line with Rodgers and Scott's (2008) definition of identity as shifting and multiple. In addition, Chameleon believes that school success is possible through combining the ideas of all the stakeholders. His emphasis on teams shows the importance of relationships in his professional meanings and understandings as a leader of learning. Morgeson, DeRue and Karam (2010) emphasise that team-oriented schools are where collective effort is valued as an important dimension of LFL.

5.4.2.2 A participatory decision maker and team leader who draws on African leadership principles

Recent literature shows that effective school heads invite and share leadership by encouraging other stakeholders to participate in the decision-making processes of their schools (Ni, Yan & Pounder, 2018). As a leader, Chameleon draws on the African principle of collective wisdom to invite teachers to actively participate in and contribute to leading and managing their school.

The staff room is our "dare" meeting point, where I take into account the rich diversity of our teachers. They have a lot to offer, since they come from different backgrounds and think differently. Through their participation in collective decision making, and through incorporating their different views, we can improve our school. Teamwork and a collective effort on the part of all stakeholders enhances a sense of school ownership, and results in decisions being effectively implemented. School stakeholders, especially teachers, normally feel free to communicate when they are in the staff room, since it is their comfort zone.

Chameleon's decision-making practices are based on the African collective decision-making model. His identity as a school head is based on his story about the experiences of the *dare*, which guides both his moral compass and his personal world view. The importance of stories in identity formation is highlighted by Rodgers and Scott (2008), who state that individuals share their behaviours, actions and beliefs in the stories they tell, which can be personal or professional (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The involvement and contributions of the teachers benefit Chameleon's leadership through creating synergies and through providing him with diverse input and ideas on matters that affect all stakeholders, thereby enhancing student learning. Mgayi (2012) affirms that successful leaders use their experiences to their advantage to create a strong foundation for excellence in an organisation.

5.4.2.3 A school head who thrives on trust — a key element in his leadership

School heads as leaders should inspire stakeholders to become innovative team members through nurturing mutual trust, sharing leadership and delegating responsibility, which leads to authenticity and integrity (Evans, 2010). Chameleon testified that he was able to develop mutual trust among stakeholders by forming a successful team in the school.

> *Trust is key in my leadership. I trust my team members through delegating and sharing responsibility with them, for mutual trust to exist in our school. This led to our winning of the Secretary's Bell award as a team. The people you lead need to trust you, since they perform their tasks based on the degree of trust they feel in you. If you are a trusted leader, you will have integrity.*

Chameleon acknowledges that trust and delegation are important ingredients for teamwork in the school. He draws heavily on his experience in a rural context that values *hunhu*, an ethical African way of life based on strong relationships. His personal meanings and understandings of relationships and emotion (Rodgers & Scott, 2008) are portrayed in his professional life, as he values relationships and uses trust as a resource to maximise stakeholders' output through team work. Trust and delegation were important mechanisms that allowed school members to contribute as dedicated school team players. Engelbrecht, Heine and Mahembe (2014, p. 10), note that "a trusting and ethical

relationship between leaders and followers is likely to positively contribute to the work engagement of employees".

Professionally Chameleon draws heavily from his personal narrative, relationships, emotions and context (Rodgers & Scott, 2008), which inform his professional meanings and understandings of self and as a leader of learning. The rural setting in particular is a key context that informs his professional meanings and understandings of self when it comes to harnessing the value of collectivism in decision making. Chameleon implements collectivism in the school setting to form teams of stakeholders that work towards a common good. He is a lifelong learner who appreciates the value of others in relationships that are based on trust, delegation and sharing of responsibility. Hence, the school head's personality is subject to continuous change throughout his/her career.

5.4.3 A synthesis of Chameleon's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

This pantoum poem below, titled "Sail as a team", is a synthesis of Chameleon's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self. The poem incorporates key phrases found in his narrative that show evidence of his lived experiences. Of the six chosen phrases, three are drawn from his personal meanings and understandings of self, and three from his professional meanings and understandings of self, with the most powerful of them functioning as the poem's title.

Sail as a team

Collective wisdom

Need to listen

Mutual trust

Delegating and sharing

Need to listen

I am situational

Delegating and sharing

Sail as a team

I am situational

Mutual trust

Sail as a team

Collective wisdom

5.4.4 Chameleon's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

Chameleon is a situational individual who believes in discussing issues and listening to other people's ideas and input in order to make informed decisions through collective wisdom. He acknowledges the importance of group processes, highlighting sailing as a team as key to successful leadership. Mutual trust for him is nurtured in teams through delegating and sharing leadership. As a school head, he is a situational leader who does not rely on one specific leadership style, but rather assumes different approaches when dealing with issues that arise in life and in the school environment. This quality in leaders is noted by Donaldson (2013), who notes that effective leaders are conscious of the situation and are able to adapt by using various strategies and styles to suit particular circumstances for survival. In addition, one key communication skill usually overlooked is listening (Steil & Bommelje, 2004), and Chameleon believes in listening to and involving others in decision making, in accordance with the African philosophy of *ubuntu*, which emphasises the importance of everyone in the community setting and

promotes group cohesion rather than a culture of individuality (Booysen, 2001; Khoza, 1994).

For Chameleon, sailing as a team is key for survival, and he focuses on succeeding as a group by following the spirit of *ubuntu*, by means of which he fosters cooperation and collaboration in the school, and encourages people to share, to contribute, and to support each other towards a collective effort by being a team player (Regine, 2009). According to Pearce (1990), *ubuntu* in Shona, the Zimbabwean language, translates as *unhu* or *hunhu*, an "ontological, epistemological and moral fountain of African philosophy" (Chimuka 2001, p. 29). *Hunhu* signals what it means to be human or a human being, and is what differentiates humans from animals (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013, p. 86). Chameleon is a person (*munhu*) who is humble, who is able to listen to others, who is respectful, hardworking, and considerate of other people's views, and who appreciates collectivism over individualism. These are all characteristics he developed growing up in a rural African community.

5.4.5 Lesson's from Chameleon's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

Being a school head is a complex job, made more difficult by the ever-changing demands in curriculum, technology, and the wider social and economic environment, which put pressure on how schools are run and managed. This resonates with Yukl (2002, p. 234), who notes that "leading schools is too complex and unpredictable to rely on a set of standardised responses to events". This indicates the need for school heads to be situational leaders who rely on various styles and approaches instead of applying a one-size-fits-all approach, as adaptive, situational leadership has become the most popular leadership theory associated with successful schools. Leaders should effectively diagnose challenges with the aim of implementing possible solutions to resolve the situation or issue (Morgan, 1997). School heads also need to be able to draw on their past and present experiences, as these have an effect on their decisions, which have implications for the current and future survival of the school as an organisation.

Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008) cite the need for school heads to promote beliefs and values that can be upheld by teachers, students and other school stakeholders.

Traditional values and approaches towards authority and decision making, such as appreciating and valuing the humanity of others, and listening and incorporating stakeholders' input into decisions, can promote collectivism rather than individualism, and can build trust that positively influences relationships amongst stakeholders and therefore improves the school. Chameleon's behaviours are motivated by group processes (Hogg, Van Knippenberg & Rast, 2012) that may inform possible LFL practices that are beneficial for working with teams in schools. The traditional values and beliefs mentioned above illustrate the importance of servant leadership on the part of school heads, in order to establish quality relationships (Staats, 2016). Focht and Ponton (2015, p.10) explain how servanthood or servant leadership also involves

> listening, persuasion, foresight, fostering collaboration, moral development, humility, developing people, building community, capacity of reciprocity, valuing people, influencing, delegating, altruism, encouraging, providing leadership, credibility, resourcing visible presence, integrity and delegating.

In a recent publication, Chisanga and Naicker (2017) connect the *ubuntu* African philosophy (which in my study I refer to using the Zimbabwean term *hunhu*) with leadership to serve others. *Ubuntu/hunhu* inform an approach that can help school heads to cultivate leadership in others through stakeholder teams that prioritise collaboration, sharing leadership roles, accepting advice from others, mutual respect and trust. This is expressed in the Zimbabwean saying, "*rume rimwe harikombi churu*", meaning "one man cannot do it all". This saying underlines the importance of collectivism in accomplishing any human activity, including leading learning in a successful school. Collectivism is an asset that needs to be fostered and nurtured by school heads as leaders for learning through servanthood.

5.5 RAINBOW: AN ACCOUNTABLE AND MORAL BEING

I first present Rainbow's personal meanings and understandings of self, followed by his professional meanings and understandings of self, and then a synthesis of the two into a pantoum poem that foregrounds his collective meanings and understandings as a leader for learning.

5.5.1 Personal meanings and understandings of self: An accountable individual

Below is a glimpse into Rainbows personal meanings and understandings of self.

5.5.1.1 A boy living up to his traditional name, Munyaradzi

Research indicates that names assigned to people matter, and that they influence people's lives in positive and negative ways (Kalist & Lee, 2009). Rainbow's traditional name is Munyaradzi, which means "consoler" or "comforter" in English. This name has influenced his character throughout his life:

> *Even though I am not the first born, most of my family members feel free to share their problems and seek advice from me because of my character. I am a friendly, open and easy going person, who is always there to listen. When someone is talking, I give him or her my full attention, whether they are young or old. I tend to nod to make them talk more by showing them that I am interested and I maintain eye contact always. I have been a blessing and joy to my family, and to the people around me. I have lived up to my name, Munyaradzi, through consoling, supporting and comforting others in their times of need.*

Drawing from his traditional name, Munyaradzi, and from his experiences with his family, Rainbow's strength as an individual is based on his values of being inclusive, open, friendly, willing to listen and able to console and offer support. The above values, which were instilled by his family, contribute different aspects to Rainbow's identity, and this aligns with Rodgers and Scott's (2008) observation that identity is multiple, and is dependent on relationships and contexts. Rainbow's relationships and various contexts result in his assuming multiple identities as an individual. The Collins English Dictionary (2014) defines a consoler is someone who alleviates sorrow or the disappointment of others through giving support and comfort. Rainbow has internalized the values of his traditional name, Munyaradzi, by being there for others and comforting people. This illustrates a type of determinism where an individual develops a sense of self and a direction in life informed by his or her name (Hedrick, 2013). Rainbow has lived up to

his name in the development of his character and personality, which influences him to console and comfort people.

5.5.1.2 A herd boy at an early age

Raymond (2014) asserts that in rural pastoralist communities, children are commonly involved in herding livestock from an early age. Rainbow grew up taking charge of other children in herding his parent's large herd of cattle.

> *I used to lead a herd of up to 60 cattle from an early age with some other children from the community. My parents wanted to inculcate the values of responsibility and accountability in me. I made sure all the cattle were taken to the grazing fields and brought back in their correct number. I also had to lock up the cattle before sunset and report what took place at the grazing fields, as well as the decisions I had made, where possible.*

Rainbow as a herd boy grew up being responsible and accountable for his actions and decisions, values that he internalized and developed. Context was a key determinant of his personal meanings and understandings of responsibility and accountability. According to Rodgers and Scott (2008, p. 734), "contexts inevitably shape our notions of who we perceive ourselves to be and how others perceive us". Rainbow was perceived to be responsible and accountable from an early age by his parents, as they entrusted him with leading the herding of the cattle. Clanet (2002) observes that African families involve children in herding livestock as a way of developing, socialising and teaching them livelihood skills such as responsibility and accountability. This way of life and experience of herding is a part of the informal education that most parents in rural areas use to equip their male children at an early age with certain skills necessary for them to become men (Hedges, Mulder, James & Lawson, 2016).

5.5.1.3 A library prefect in high school

A school needs a library to equip teachers and students with various resources for lifelong learning, such as books and electronic materials (Rubin, 2017). Rainbow was a library

prefect throughout his high school years under the guidance of Canadian teachers who taught him valuable life lessons.

> *I was groomed by the Canadian teachers. They taught us that education is a lifelong journey and never to stop learning. They also taught us to treasure books as they are a source of knowledge that can be used by generations to come. They encouraged us not to steal books from the library, but rather to protect them. This motivated me to excel in school, and since I was a library prefect I had access to all kinds of useful books for my different subjects. I became a role model to the other students and library prefects, earning me the position of chief library prefect in my final year.*

Rainbow's experiences as a library prefect taught him to value education and educational resources, which encouraged him to develop into a lifelong learner. His experience shows how multiple stories of an individual sum up one's identity (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Rainbow's story of being a library prefect and his relationship with the Canadian teachers contributed greatly to his personal meanings and understandings of self. According to Baro and Eze (2016), a teacher can become a coach who strengthens self-esteem, a love for education, and responsibility for learning, thus enhancing students' academic achievement. This aligns with Rainbow's experience with the Canadian teachers who taught him. As a role model, Rainbow was able to lead by example through performing well academically.

Rainbow's traditional name, Munyaradzi, has influenced his personal identity as he has always tried to live up to it by being a welcoming, consoling and comforting individual who is always there for others. This highlights the importance of context, such as family and relationships in influencing people's narratives as a basis for meanings, understanding and identity (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Rainbow's formative experiences herding cattle inculcated life-long values that include taking charge, protecting what is important, and giving feedback. He values education, something he learnt from his mentor teachers, which made him an exemplary student to others as a child, and to stakeholders later as a teacher and school head.

5.5.2 Professional meanings and understandings of self: A moral teacher

Below is a glimpse into Chameleon's professional meanings and understandings of self.

5.5.2.1 Becoming a teacher-leader

Crowther et al. (2008) note that teacher-leaders are effective teachers who exhibit best practices and aspire for professional growth. They assume more challenging leadership roles in the school hierarchical structure, such as head of department, deputy head and the headship. As a teacher-leader, Rainbow held several positions that prepared him for his current headship position.

> *I was once a cluster resource coordinator, coordinating seven schools and their heads […] where I learnt how school heads operate […] as a deputy head with my head we worked flat out to upgrade the face of the school and fenced the school because it was in a dilapidated state. […] At Sekuma Secondary School as the head I led the electrification of the school and also constructed some grounds with the help of Castrol Company. So, I learnt quite a lot before I became a school head.*

The experience Rainbow acquired from holding different school positions has contributed to his successful leadership. From his personal meanings and understandings of self, responsibility and accountability urge him to assume different professional roles that give him the opportunity to exercise these qualities. His personal meanings and understandings give Rainbow a professional framework that encourages him to aspire to greater LFL positions, which also come with greater accountability and responsibility. His journey to his current position as school head emphasises the value of school systems being able to provide potential teachers with leadership experience that prepares them for the challenging position of being a school head. Jensen, Skibsted and Christensen (2015) state that leadership development for teacher-leaders is an ongoing process that requires a long-term approach based on strong preparatory experiences. These are key in forming the foundation for building the confidence, skills and professional knowledge necessary for future school heads. In addition, Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) consider the experience and continual professional development accumulated throughout

a teacher's career to be part of a teacher's preparation to meet the increasingly tough expectations of the job of school head. Rainbow's various LFL positions also affirm Beauchamp and Thomas (2009)'s findings that teachers' professional identity changes continuously throughout their careers.

5.5.2.2 A teacher blending home and work identities: School head versus family man

As a school head, Rainbow meets the different needs of stakeholders by negotiating among his multiple selves to cope with his position as the school head in a turbulent environment. The personal and professional components of an individual's life are inseparable (Evans, 2010). For leaders, navigating between the two is critical, as it brings balance and harmony to both home and work life, which have to be constantly negotiated throughout one's career (Evans, 2010). Rainbow's ability to balance his life contributes to the successful management of his school.

> *I am a man who is appreciated at both home and work. At home, I am a father, husband and I need to perform all these roles and satisfy the needs of my family the same way I satisfy those of my staff members.*

Rainbow acknowledges that his personal life, especially his family life, is just as important to him as his professional life and relationships at work with colleagues, and that they both have an impact on him as an individual and leader. This is in line with research on the multiplicity of identities that are negotiated by school heads as leaders for learning in fulfilling their various roles and tasks within the school (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Rodgers & Scott 2008). Evans (2010) states that school heads need to model acceptable behaviours and need to take care of their families in the same way that they take care of the various stakeholders in the school (parents, teachers, staff and students).

5.5.2.3 Manager versus leader

According to Coleman and Glover (2010), leadership is focused on the organisational mission and vision (survival), while management is concerned with the everyday activities executed to realise the purpose of the existence of the organisation. Leadership and management need to complement each other for any organisation to survive and succeed. Rainbow acknowledges the importance of differentiating between the two as a school head:

> *A leader is different from a manager in the school context. Managers are mostly found in companies where there is a results-based output. In schools we have to adopt similar results-based criteria, but sometimes leadership qualities are very important in bringing out the best in people. Leadership is also the ability to bring the right people together to create a recipe for success.*

Rainbow understands that his role as a school head extends far beyond management, and that it includes providing leadership that is people-oriented, and that inspires others to reach their fullest potential for the school to benefit. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) outline how leadership and management roles overlap and interconnect to create successful school leadership. Rainbow agrees that it is important to have both management and leadership qualities, as they complement each other in maintaining and developing the school. The above shows that leading learning is a highly volatile activity that calls for school heads to assume a flexible identity, as the professional identity of teachers is dynamic, rather than stable (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

5.5.2.4 The good shepherd with a moral call to honour

Moral leadership is "a call to honour" or "making a difference" through making an everlasting impact on or contribution to other people's lives (Bogue, 1994, p. 13). Rainbow is a devoted Christian school head who sees his role as extending beyond the academic purpose of the school. His role includes developing students spiritually and morally, and preparing them to lead better lives under God's love and guidance.

> *As a Christian, I see my job as a teacher and school head as a calling beyond my job description. I am a Good Shepherd who is there to give life to students and*

guide them towards the greener pastures of life, beginning with being responsible citizens who respect life, respect other people's human rights, and give back to the community. I also take time to mould the morals and spiritual lives of the students. This is important, since it contributes to good discipline, morals, and ethically acceptable behaviours on the part of the students.

Rainbow is a Good Shepherd who is trying to make a lasting contribution to the students' lives by promoting their relationship with God, so that they can develop spiritually and morally into responsible citizens. A person's identity depends upon the context in which they find themselves and the groups they affiliate with, such as religious groups (Gee, 2001; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Rainbow's Christian personal meanings and understandings of self inform his professional life as a leader for learning, illustrating how the personal and the professional are often inseparable for teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Rainbow therefore goes beyond his stipulated professional duties and sees himself as a Good Shepherd whose role as a teacher is directed to the moral care of students through leading by example and upholding Christian values (Hodgkinson, 1991). Hodgkinson (1991) views education as more than the simple exchange of knowledge from one generation to another, and as the art of calling others to live their lives to the fullest.

Professionally Rainbow has taken charge in different educational positions which gave him the diverse experience needed to take up the challenging role of school head. He balances his personal and professional lives and blends management and leadership, which shows the various identities within the teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Spiritually, his role as a school head extends beyond academics to care for and nurture the spiritual growth of his students. This provides further evidence of the inseparable nature of personal and professional identity, and how both contribute to Rainbow's LFL.

5.5.3 A synthesis of Rainbow's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

This pantoum poem below, titled "Education is a lifelong journey", is a synthesis of Rainbow's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self. The

poem incorporates key phrases found in his narrative that show evidence of his lived experiences. Of the six chosen phrases, three are drawn from his personal meanings and understandings of self, and three from his professional meanings and understandings of self, with the most powerful of them functioning as the poem's title.

Education is a lifelong journey

The best of people
A role model
Leadership and management
A good shepherd

A role model
Always there to listen
Leadership and management
Education is a lifelong journey

Always there to listen
A good shepherd
Education is a lifelong journey
The best of people

5.5.4 Rainbow's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings of self

Rainbow always listens carefully to people, and uses gestures like nodding and looking straight into the eyes of the person he is talking to, to show emotions and concern. The importance of both non-verbal and verbal communication is noted by Ainsworth (2012), who asserts that non-verbal communication (such as holding a slight smile, nodding occasionally, raising eyebrows to show interest and maintaining good eye contact) makes people appear more emotionally stable. Rainbow believes he is a Good Shepherd who is accountable to stakeholders and to God. He sees his role and responsibility as a school head as involving bringing out the best in everyone with the aim of holistically educating

children. In his view, education should incorporate moral learning for students to become responsible citizens who are able to distinguish right from wrong. Groysberg and Slind (2012) observe that individuals can bring out the best in people through attentive listening, which signals respect, stimulates engagement and shows humility. Another special type of listening that Rainbow exhibits is spiritual listening, as he believes teaching is a calling. He sees himself as a Good Shepherd sent by God to the school to guide students in developing a loving relationship with him. Ramirez (2009) acknowledges spirituality as a basis for making decisions for people.

Rainbow believes education is a lifelong journey and that school stakeholders should become habitual learners for them to effectively coordinate teaching and learning in schools. Rainbow is a head who acknowledges that his headship infuses both management and leadership, which contribute differently towards school achievement. Spillane and Diamond (2007) distinguish between the two, describing management as being concerned with the effective and efficient maintenance of the way in which the organisation operates, and leadership as focusing on influencing people to achieve desirable goals. Rainbow understands this difference, but mentions how the two are equally important, and how he has to constantly negotiate between the two roles, as there is a fine distinction between them. School heads need to be both managers and leaders, as the two roles are intertwined and are both key to successful schools, as they ensure that school activities promote and monitor the learning of all students and other stakeholders.

5.5.5 Lessons from Rainbow's collective personal and professional meanings and understandings

Leadership is an everyday experience when there are groups of people or animals involved. Leaders need to be good communicators and use different communication channels, signals and gestures to make their vision understood, and to ensure that it is upheld by other stakeholders. This is supported by Blose and Naicker (2018), who find that good leaders are effective communicators. In extending the literature on leaders as effective communicators, I assert that school heads should listen emotionally (for how people feel about their leadership) as well as spiritually and ethically, based on their religious and cultural affiliations, in order to attend to and serve the needs of all

stakeholders. School heads should communicate their mission and vision with care and empathy, should focus on the learning of all stakeholders, and should expect excellence.

In most cases, the school heads are responsible and accountable to other stakeholders for the school's academic results (Samkange, 2013). The heads are leaders of instruction in schools, as they enforce the timeous and correct interpretation and implementation of the curriculum, and are responsible for coordinating effective learning. This is key for academic success in schools. To ensure the success of schools, according to Coleman and Glover (2010), heads need to be both managers and leaders, as leadership is necessary for setting the values and vision of a school or a group, while management is necessary for the smooth execution of everyday activities and for the running the school. School heads should blend leadership and management to ensure that students' learning is at the core of all school activities. In order to accomplish this, the school heads should become leaders for learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). In extending the literature on LFL, school heads should strike a balance between leading and managing, through negotiating their personal and professional meanings and understandings as leaders for learning, to bring out the best in the people they lead.

In addition to focusing on the academic achievement of students, school heads should promote a holistic education that also focus on spirituality and culture, as this is necessary for students to develop into good citizens. The school head needs to be exemplary, through being a Good Shepherd who influences his or her flock visibly and invisibly through a special bond, faith, trust and relationship. According to McCormick and Davenport (2003), the image of a shepherd offers the best fit for effective modern-day leaders for learning, as "shepherd leadership is a matter of head and hand and heart" (p. 5). Malone and Fry (2003, p. 8) see shepherd leadership as closely linked to spirituality, and define it as

> creating a vision wherein leaders and followers experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference; establishing a social/organisational culture based on the values of altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have a sense of membership, feel understood and appreciated, and have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others.

Spiritual listening and leadership through being a Good Shepherd is key for school improvement and effectiveness, as it bears the "fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control" (Galatians 5: 22–23). This makes it easier for school heads to mobilise others to want to work towards the shared aspirations, vision and goals of a learning organisation.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the meanings and understandings of self that the school heads draw on as leaders for learning. This second level of analysis unpacked my four storied narratives from Chapter 4, and addressed the second research question: "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?" This question was analysed according to Rodgers and Scott's (2008) and Beauchamp and Thomas's (2011) theories of teacher identity. The analysis was inspired by three key experiences in both the personal and professional lives of each participant, with the aim of capturing each participant's meanings and understandings of self as a school head. Also presented was a synthesis of the personal and professional identities that sum up the meanings and understandings for each school head's teacher identity based on my analytical frameworks (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

Certain common contextual meanings and understandings of the school heads were captured, such as being Christians, lifelong learners, and the influence of family and African traditional culture. Also of importance were certain common interpersonal qualities and emotions that constituted their meanings and understandings of self, such as being caring, inclusive, modelling exemplary behaviour, and nurturing others. The common values and skills of the school heads were important to note, as they contributed significantly to their meanings and understandings of self as individuals. These were: listening, trust, being supportive, humility, responsibility, decision making and valuing education. The unique meanings and understandings of selves of the school heads informed their leadership practices as individuals too. For example, Shining Star was entrepreneurial, Martyr focused her motherly leadership around creating a family-oriented, life-giving school, Chameleon's meanings and understandings of self stemmed from a strong *hunhu* African cultural background, and Rainbow chose to lead according

to his traditional name, Munyaradzi, as a Good Shepard. The above meanings and understandings of self offered enabled the school heads to offer a holistic education to the students in their schools.

The following chapter addresses the third and final research question: “How do school heads enact their practice as leaders for learning?” Informed by inductive analysis, the chapter discusses how my participants’ understandings and meanings of LFL inform their leadership practices in schools, and identifies both common and unique themes that emerge from the participants’ narratives. This analysis leads to the study conclusions.

CHAPTER 6
ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVES: LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRACTICES OF ZIMBABWEAN SCHOOL HEADS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the personal and professional meanings and understandings that Shining Star, Martyr, Chameleon and Rainbow drew on as leaders for learning, at the second level of analysis. This chapter continues with my second level of analysis by focusing on the school heads' LFL practices. Leadership practices include all activities, actions and decisions taken by school heads during the enactment of their day-to-day work (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001).

To answer my third research question ("How do school heads enact their practice as leaders for learning?"), I analysed my participants' narratives inductively, making sure to include in their voices. I used excerpts from their stories in presenting their LFL practices. In analysing the narratives inductively, certain themes emerged. According to Patton (1990, p. 390), the inductive process produces themes that begin as patterns and then crystallise into categories that can be summed up into themes that "emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data generated and analysis".

The chapter begins by presenting themes that are common across all the participants' narratives. The common themes were:

- socially conscious leaders
- creating an emotionally safe environment for all stakeholders
- reflective organisational learning leaders
- maximising school spaces and places to enhance student learning; and
- leadership underpinned by *hunhu*.

I then focus on the unique themes that emerged for each participant, labelled according to the leadership practices that emerged. The LFL practices are discussed in relation to the school heads' personal and professional meanings and understandings. Table 6.1 shows the unique LFL practices that emerged:

Table 6.1 Participants' unique leadership for learning practices

Participant	Unique Leadership for Learning Practices
Shining Star	Creating and sustaining healthy competition among school stakeholders
	Investing in teachers as a resource: professional capital through exchange programmes
	Harnessing the benefits of social capital through organisational networks beyond school to promote teaching and learning
Martyr	A female instructional leader who capitalises on an embodied type of leadership based on visibility, confidence and exemplary behavior
	Mothering style of leadership in the school
Chameleon	Adopting the African indigenous strategy of *dare* in the school
Rainbow	Breaking down oppressive gender hierarchies by challenging traditional norms to promote girl child access in education
	Promoting the Biblical David Shepherd educational leadership

6.2 COMMONALITIES ACROSS THE LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRACTICES

The following are the common themes that emerged from the participants' descriptions of their LFL practices. These themes were mentioned by two or more participants.

6.2.1 Socially conscious leaders

Schools heads do not operate in isolation. They therefore need to adopt a leadership approach that involves a higher level of consciousness of themselves as individuals, of other stakeholders, and of the wider world (Poultney & Fordham, 2018). Jones (2012) uses the term "conscious leadership" to describe greater levels of self-awareness and collective awareness, shared dialogue, and mutual respect and accountability, which inform actions that promote interconnectedness with the world and motivate leaders to act responsibly. Similarly, Stodd (2017) refers to "social leadership" as something based on interpersonal psychology and development of human beings centred on collectivism,

especially in communities where together people can achieve more, be safer, and be more effective. Considering the increasingly rapid change, uncertainty and complexity of the environment in which schools operate, there is a need for socially conscious leadership.

Martyr personal and professional meanings and understandings of being religious to inform her leadership practices. She is a genuine individual who shares her vision of a life-giving school. In doing so, she is a socially conscious leader who is mindful of the valuable input that other stakeholders could contribute to the realisation of a successful school. This is illustrated in the following excerpt from her narrative:

> *I accommodate and accept suggestions from everyone. When you are humble and you have humility as part of your leadership style, it actually stands out. In the school, people open up to me and let me know exactly how they feel and how they have experienced the way I lead or manage the school, which helps me to improve. In the staffroom, the teachers and I plan together as a teaching body, especially in relation to our focus for the term and the year as a team.*

In schools, the school head establishes a context for cultivating stakeholders' participation and creativity by acknowledging whether their input is welcome and useful (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Martyr's interpersonal characteristics foreground humility as her resource and strength as a socially conscious school head. Her accommodation and acceptance of other people's suggestions, and her humility, have rich historical roots in Christianity, as Christianity teaches that humility helps one to acquire wisdom and success with the help of others (Ou, Su, Chiu & Owens, 2014). Martyr's socially conscious leadership is informed by her personal Christian values, which have positively shaped her LFL practices through nurturing the interdependence of stakeholders in the successful running of the school. Hallinger (2011) alludes to examples such as Martyr's when he states that the personal knowledge, beliefs, values and experience of leaders are key to their LFL practices.

As a socially conscious leader, Chameleon believes in discussing issues and bringing other stakeholders on board when addressing issues or making decisions. This is informed by his valuing of collective wisdom, a principle he learnt through attending the *dare*, an African model of decision making. Other meanings and understandings that inform his LFL practices are the need to listen, working with others towards a common goal, and

being flexible in his responses to situations he encounters, rather than adopting a single universal approach:

> *As a leader, I need to accommodate a number of things that other people believe in. I need to listen to them, to their problems, and to issues that they have raised so that I do not ignore their issues or challenges. By listening to different groups, I become a better leader, and I am able to gather new information to correct myself.*

Schools as complex organisations have shown the redundancy of the traditional top-down leadership approach, as it has failed to keep up with the times. School heads therefore need to move away from such outdated perceptions of leadership (such as the "great man theory") in order to be flexible and acknowledge that two minds are better than one (Wang, Zhang & Jia, 2017). Chameleon recognises the importance of other stakeholders' voices and input, and recognises that being a socially conscious head makes him a better leader for learning. His open-mindedness shows "the ability to be open to others' perceptions and values, while refraining from imposing one's perceptions and values on others"; the ability to "keep an open mind to others' suggestions, opinion, feedback, [and] comments"; and the willingness "to learn and listen" through "active listening" (Hean, 2008, p. 2). Research shows that socially conscious leaders who demonstrate humility are able to practise shared, distributed and servant leadership. Hallinger (2011) notes that successful LFL practices include school heads being able to inspire others to make sacrifices for and collectively strive towards the school vision and mission through shared leadership. Chameleon's LFL practice can therefore be characterised as socially conscious.

Rainbow is inspired by his traditional name, Munyaradzi, which translates as "consoler" or "comforter", and which form the basis for his personal and professional meanings of self and how he relates to his immediate environment and to others. In keeping with how his traditional name evokes comforting others, he sees himself as a Good Shepherd who is called by God to be there for others. Rainbow is a socially conscious leader whose LFL practices show how he values others and strives for inclusivity and democracy in the school:

I adopt certain laissez-faire strategies, and sometimes I am autocratic, but mostly I am democratic and involve others in decision making in matters that affect them or their working environment or conditions. I am a Rainbow in nature. I give full and equal attention to all stakeholders, regardless of their age or position, by listening so that I can assist in any possible way. Even students may come to me needing help, and I have to support them.

School heads are responsible for creating and nurturing a school environment where democratic leadership values can thrive, and where people can share ideas and debate issues without being afraid of being victimised (Starrat, 2001). Rainbow, using his strong interpersonal skills and comforting nature, listens to all stakeholders equally, including the students, giving them a voice and ownership in participating in matters affecting them. As a socially conscious leader, Rainbow maintains strong ties with all school stakeholders and encourages democratic principles in leading and managing the school (Liu & Li, 2018). Rainbow's democratic approach is key for developing the instrumental values necessary for successful LFL practices by school heads. According to Wolk (2000), this can be done through promoting and nurturing self-discipline, caring, integrity, mutual respect, fairness, interdependence and risk taking.

The school heads seem to adopt socially conscious leadership practices that recognise and value stakeholders' collective contributions to the success of the school. The school heads' socially conscious leadership contributes to their successful LFL practices, such as being democratic, listening, accommodating, accepting other people's suggestions, beliefs and values, and not ignoring stakeholders' problems. For example, by being humble and approachable, Martyr encourages stakeholders to contribute ideas that help to improve her LFL practices. Socially conscious school leaders are aware and mindful of themselves, of others, and the world around them (Poultney & Fordham, 2018). This helps them to understand their circumstances and decide how to respond to them in ways that honour the collective values, belief and feelings of all school stakeholders as leaders for learning.

According to Miller, Schlitz and Vieten (2010, p. 27), "humans are predisposed to connect" and socially conscious leadership takes this into account. This concurs with research findings that the leadership capacity of school stakeholders' should broaden, and that schools should increase their sources of leadership by encouraging more and more

stakeholders to participate in decision making (Barth, 1990; Fullan, 2001; Murphy, 2005). LFL is a shared phenomenon that calls for a collective effort on the part of all stakeholders. According to Hallinger (2011), school heads can share their leadership in school through various strategies and behaviours that incorporate stakeholders in making decisions that affect their lives or work. Therefore, successful, socially conscious school heads have to nurture a strong sense of interconnectedness and interdependence, and collective LFL practices. These include humility, listening, democracy, and accommodating and accepting other people's input, which are key for human survival and school survival.

6.2.2 Creating an emotionally safe environment for all stakeholders

Schools are complex arenas where the educational process is an emotionally laden one for all stakeholders: teachers, students and parents (Schutz, Cross, Hong & Osbon, 2007). Emotions and growth or education are intertwined, and so school heads need to understand the emotional needs of stakeholders through employing emotional intelligence for effective LFL (Weinberger, 2009). According to Goleman and Boyatzis (2017), being emotionally intelligent allows school heads to be self-aware and to communicate effectively with other stakeholders. Moreso, Goleman and Boyatzis (2017, pp. 3–4) break down emotional intelligence into four fundamental capabilities that can be expanded further: "self-awareness (emotional self-awareness), self-management (emotional self-control, adaptability, achievement orientation and positive outlook), social awareness (empathy and organisational awareness) and social skills (influence, coach and mentor, conflict management, teamwork and inspirational leader)". Creating an emotionally safe working environment is essential for school heads as leaders for learning to formulate shared school values with stakeholders that will constitute a school culture (Hallinger, 2011). A safe emotional space can be created by the following LFL practices: increasing engagement, increasing the self-esteem of stakeholders, improving productivity, and accelerating student learning.

The participants in this study seemed to understand the importance of LFL practices that create a safe emotional working environment in order to create a healthy and productive learning culture for all. In his efforts to create an emotionally safe environment for all

stakeholders, Shining Star draws from his personal and professional meanings and understandings. He is a caring and responsible man who believes in making learning fun, and in creating a better school that holistically caters for whole-child development, including students' emotions.

> *As the school head, I tell my other stakeholders that let us respect every child and the children have rights. We need to find alternative means of correcting them other than corporal punishment. We should not forget to provide them with equal opportunities to live, learn, play and grow. Others schools discourage sporting activities saying it is a waste of academic time and students lose academic concentration but we know that learning is not only academic. Our vision as a school is to take students and bring the best out of them by making them believe in themselves and their capabilities through promoting their self-esteem, helping and directing them to realise their potential.*

The United Nations states that "the purpose of education is to foster development of the child's personality, talent, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential to prepare him or her for a responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of the sexes, and friendship among all peoples" (Mononela et al., 2008, p. 3). Shining Star's LFL practices show caring and respect for the students' rights, and as school head he tries to offer students equal opportunities in all aspects of life, especially academics and sports, in order to make learning interesting. This is supported by Hallinger's (2011) model, which frames LFL as clearly directed towards particular learning outcomes and student growth. Esa, Mutallib and Azman (2015) also find that non-academic extramural activities seem to promote whole-child development, and Zekan, Peronja and Russo (2012) find that participation in sport contributes to improved mental health and an emotionally safe school environment for students.

To create an emotionally safe school environment, Martyr draws from her meanings and understandings to inform her LFL practices. Being a Christian, she applies the golden rule, "do unto others as you want them to do unto you", in order to prevent emotional abuse amongst stakeholders and thereby create an emotional safer school environment. She also uses loving, caring and nurturing LFL practices to create positive self-esteem and to motivate the school stakeholders to excel.

> *Whatever we say should not damage someone's reputation or the reputation of the school, but we should use words for the good of all. As a leader I always say to my staff, let us watch what we say to our students. If we want the best out of them, let us encourage, support and motivate them to believe in themselves. We should not say words to demotivate or rebuke the students so that they lose their self-esteem and see themselves as losers. I do not allow any staff member to speak ill of another stakeholder, especially students and parents, because doing so will affect their performance and reputation.*

School leadership that creates a positive school culture matters a great deal (Moore et al., 2017). Martyr's prioritising of a safe emotional school environment is an example of the school head's responsibility to "protect what is important" as leaders for learning (Hallinger, 2011). Martyr's LFL practices show the emotional intelligence that she draws from to create a safe emotional school environment as a school head. This is critical to meet the needs of stakeholders, as a safe environment brings peace of mind, joy and a sense of belonging (Moore et al., 2017).

From a slightly different perspective, Chameleon draws from his unique personal and professional meanings and understandings to focus on the positive motivation of stakeholders as a way of building an emotionally safer school environment. He believes in collective wisdom, in working well as a team, and in the importance of motivating team members:

> *It is very important for leaders to motivate stakeholders, as I have seen that it gives a sense of urgency or purpose for them to perform better. If there is no motivation, performance is generally poor. Motivation also takes different forms; it can involve monetary incentives, motivational talks, and applause or recognition of those who have done well. In our school it is through motivation that our teachers perform best. Even in the classroom, students perform better if they are motivated, so as a leader who wants good results I motivate all stakeholders to go the extra mile.*

The idea of motivation and incentives was also part of Rainbow's LFL practices. He drew from his traditional name, Munyaradzi, meaning "comforter" or "consoler", and aimed to

meet the needs of the teachers as he advocated for monetary incentives to enhance their welfare and motivation in the school. Rainbow stated:

> *As a school, we had to sit down with the parents' body in a meeting to talk about monetary incentives to motivate and boost the morale of the teachers for them to work harder and deliver the best quality education to our children. I was happy that even the parents were willing to pay more to get the value of education they wanted for their children.*

Research has shown that stakeholders' performance in schools is based on three major elements: motivation, ability, and environment, with motivation being the most complex to manage (Griffin & Moorhead, 2009; Jackson-Palmer, 2010). As leaders for learning, Chameleon and Rainbow practise ongoing motivation to keep stakeholders focused on the task, mission and vision. Motivation and incentives can contribute to an emotionally safe school environment, as positive emotions are drivers of achievement.

Rainbow strives for an emotionally safe school environment for all stakeholders, as he expresses in his narrative:

> *Of importance to me is my smile that I wear as a school head, which is a symbol of welcome to the students, teachers, parents and all the other school stakeholders. The smile signals to everyone that they are welcome, and are free to perform their different roles and tasks, including participating in school activities. If a person is happy at work, they tend to perform better and achieve more. The opposite is also true, and unhappy workers are likely to fail to achieve their targets.*
>
> *Love is the key to life and as a school head I have learnt to love the students like my own children. As a parent, I always want the best out of the students. I encourage all teachers to love the students, because when they look at us they expect us to love them. We spend more time with them than their parents do. When the students feel loved, appreciated and valued, they tend to work hard and make us proud as a school and as their teachers and parents. Love is also necessary in a school because it promotes a sense of belonging, and promotes the teamwork and family values that are necessary for students to operate in harmony.*

Feeling emotional safe is when one feels free and protected from any form of harm or attack emotionally (Walkley & Cox, 2013). As a comforter, Rainbow believes in a loving and happy environment, as happy people tend to relate well and are highly productive. According to Kansas State University (2009, p. 1), "happiness is a broad and subjective word, but a person's well-being includes the presence of positive emotions, like joy and interest, and the absence of negative emotions, like apathy and sadness". In addition, happiness is a valuable tool for maximising organisational outcomes and increasing an organisation's competitive advantage. LFL practices should aim to increase stakeholders' happiness and security to create an emotionally safe environment and an emotionally healthier school climate. Research on the link between school climate or emotional environment and academic achievement finds that schools with a healthier emotional climate scored better than others (Macneil, Pratter & Busch, 2009).

The school heads attempted to create an emotionally safer working environment for all stakeholders by implementing certain LFL practices that exhibited elements of their emotional intelligence. With both teachers and children, Rainbow uses non-verbal gestures, such as a smile, to put people at ease, and emphasises love, family values, a sense of belonging and motivation through monetary incentive or words of inspiration. Shining Star focused on respecting students' rights, teacher morale, positive self-esteem and igniting the motivation of all stakeholders. Research has shown that positive emotions in the work environment have a direct impact by increasing the productivity, creativity, effectiveness and enthusiasm of all stakeholders (Ouzouni, 2016). If school heads do not create emotionally safe environments, stakeholders' and teachers' creativity and contribution to student learning may decrease. Although suggestions show that there is no direct relationship between leadership and learning of students. However the relationship between the above two is fostered by the school structures and atmosphere created by the school head (Hallinger, 2011). School heads should therefore acquire the knowledge and skills to implement LFL practices such as incentives, gestures, compliments, love and motivation to help other stakeholders cope with their emotions better, and to create an emotionally safe school environment. This is supported by Asrar-ul-Haq, Anwar and Hassan (2017), who find that emotions have been shown to affect stakeholders' personal and professional lives, and hence the quality of their work and the academic performance of students.

6.2.3 Reflective leaders in learning organisations

School heads learn to manage and lead better through reflection. Reflection is a process that can happen at the organisational level or the individual level, and the purpose of reflective leadership is to learn from past experience and uncertainties (Göker & Bozkuş, 2017). Göker and Bozkuş (2017) also note that the role and responsibility of school heads is to create schools that operate as reflective learning communities. In such communities every member values reflection for learning, and contributes to the leading and managing of the school, which is necessary for schools as learning organisations. Senge (1990) explains that reflective leadership brings about learning beyond individuals, and produces cognitive learning that is shared; all stakeholders are reflective learners, and this learning equips them to become better leaders. Reflection is therefore a key aspect of LFL. Hallinger's (2011) empirical research finds that vision and goals are essential ingredients through which leadership can impact learning. School heads should encourage reflection on the part of all stakeholders in order to learn from them and to ensure that the vision, goals and focus of LFL are met, maintained or improved. Below are some of the participants' LFL practices that seem to portray the school heads as reflective leaders.

Shining Star, as a responsible school head and a reflective leader for learning, borrows from his personal and professional meanings and understandings to examine how far he has come and to map the way forward with others through reflection. The need to create a better school has brought home to him that stakeholders' input is always valuable:

> *Good schools take time to create, and it requires a collective effort for them to become a reality. We meet as a team to do annual evaluations to continue the cycle of our school learning improvement journey. As a school, we evaluate ourselves by visiting other different top academic and sporting schools like the Solom Foundation, Peter House and St Georges. We look at their infrastructure, their facilities and their practices, and then we come back with a different perspective. We align ourselves with what we think is best for our school to improve. We acknowledge that we cannot match some of their standards or get to where they are, especially when we consider the fees they charge and the resources they have. However, with the limited resources we have we can still change and become a better school. We are also making progress in our own right and in our own way.*

Ersozlu (2016) emphasises the necessity for school heads, and all school stakeholders, to practise reflective leadership in order to facilitate effective learning. This is exactly what Shining Star appears to do, as he makes sure that every stakeholder contributes to the annual evaluation process and to other processes of cyclical learning through reflection, with the aim of improving the teaching and learning atmosphere. Shining Star's reflective LFL practices show that he is a visionary leader. Visionary leaders are seen as transformational leaders according to the theory of transformational leadership, which is also considered to be an aspect of LFL (Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Leithwood, 1994).

In a similar manner, Martyr employs certain reflective LFL practices in her drive to create a life-giving school, as she plans and reviews the progress of the school with other stakeholders:

> *In our school we conduct an annual review with all stakeholders to look back at how the year has gone by, to take note of what we have done, what we have not managed to do, where we did well, where we need to improve in order for us to plan for the upcoming year. I meet each Tuesday with the teachers to look back at the week that has passed and to plan ahead. We normally have our little staff meeting for 30 minutes during break, and it is a time for checking in with others to see where they are in relation to our set targets. It is also a time for hearing what people think we should be doing differently, what has happened, and how we can improve in the coming week.*

Martyr demonstrates her reflective LFL practices through these annual and weekly reviews that aim to learn from the past year or week. This approach is supported by Castelli, Marx and Egleston (2014), who recommend that school heads as reflective leaders should encourage stakeholders to develop or grow through experiences encountered in and outside of the school context, as part of learning through reflection. This correspond with Robinson et al.'s (2008) findings, which state that school heads as leaders for learning should create structures and systems within the school that enhance the learning of all school members through reflection.

Chameleon also practises reflective LFL practices as a school head by monitoring the academic progress of the students and the coverage of the syllabus by the teachers at his

school. This is informed by his awareness and understanding of his identity as being situational, which encourages him to execute different roles as school head:

> *As for the education of students, I am always monitoring it from my office, which is my safe haven. In the office I also check on the teachers' records and scheme books. I check on them and assess where they are in terms of curriculum coverage. I also check on students' exercise books, after which the teacher has to come in and we discuss my findings and various ways forward. I also check on students' reports, student progress, and any other information that needs my attention.*

Rainbow, who understands his personal and professional identity as being a Good Shepherd who is there to listen to people in order to bring out the best in them, uses various channels and platforms to reflect on his leadership and the overall school performance as a way of monitoring educational delivery:

> *At this school, we use various platforms to share ideas and receive feedback from the stakeholders. For example, we have an annual parents meeting, and parents come to the school for prize-giving. Consultation days are also important, and we usually place suggestion boxes in every classroom so that we can also get the parents' views on what they want changed or improved to enhance the provision of quality education to their children.*

Ersozlu (2016) observes that reflective school heads always find ways to create communication channels or platforms by means of which stakeholders are offered the opportunity to contribute ideas on how the school operates. This resonates with what Rainbow does as a school head, where he solicits suggestions from stakeholders (parents) at the annual prize-giving and on consultation days. In addition, effective LFL is achievable through reflective processes within the academic structures, to determine how academic learning processes can be promoted and improved through team work and cooperation amongst stakeholders to identify synergies (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 2010).

The participants were reflective leaders who also involved stakeholders in their different reflective LFL practices. These practices included reflection that included parents' input in matters affecting their children's lives, such as on Rainbow's consultation days with parents. Shining Star reflected at a team and school level, and comparing his school with other top-performing schools to learn about those schools and improve on his school's

way of doing things. Martyr's reflective leadership style involved annual reviews of school activities with all stakeholders and regular weekly reviews with teachers, while Chameleon focused on reflecting on his teachers' curriculum coverage, his students' progress and the execution of his own duties. Such reflective leadership practices form part of instructional LFL by school heads. Leaders for learning are fundamental in creating reflective learning communities, where everyone is a learner within the school for the purpose of improved academic performance (Göker & Bozkuş, 2017).

Knapp, Copland and Talbert (2003, p. 12) find that school heads can realise reflective school communities through committing themselves to certain strategies: "establishing a focus on learning, building professional communities that value learning, engaging external environments that matter for learning, acting strategically and creating coherence". Göker and Bozkuş (2017) concur, and state that reflective LFL practices also foster systems learning in any organisation. They recommend that heads of school harness the knowledge and expertise of stakeholders by facilitating such learning through reflection for all members of the school, as this can benefit the school as a whole (Göker & Bozkuş, 2017).

6.2.4 Maximising school spaces and places to enhance student learning

The OECD (2006, p. 36) defines an educational space as

> a physical space that supports multiple and diverse teaching and learning programmes and pedagogies, including current technologies; one that demonstrates optimal, cost-effective building performance and operation over time. It is also one that respects and is in harmony with the environment; and one that encourages social participation, providing a healthy, comfortable, safe, secure and stimulating setting for its occupants.

Zane (2015) defines places of academic learning as settings where students actively gain experiences that comprise of professional and practical knowledge for survival. This knowledge can be acquired formally or informally (Manninen, 2007). This resonates with the LFL literature, which states that schools do not operate in isolation but rather in an open system that is in constant interaction (Mulford & Silins, 2011). The effectiveness of

school heads' LFL depends on the various opportunities and threats that exist within a school or in the wider school environment (Hallinger, 2011). The learning places and spaces in and outside the school environment can constitute either opportunities or threats to the learning of all stakeholders, including the LFL practices of the head. Below are some of the LFL practices (in relation to the use of available school spaces and places to enhance student learning) used by the participating Zimbabwean school heads to meet the current students' needs.

6.2.4.1 School farm space

Growing up as a responsible first-born son in a peasant farming family informed Shining Star's appreciation of the importance of farming as an everyday part of people's lives as a source of food and income. He believed that the school farm could offer more than just food production, and that it could be included as a learning site for horticulture as a subject offered by the school:

> *Food is a basic human need for all school stakeholders. The Marist Brothers run our school farm, which produces milk, meat and fresh vegetables that are available to all stakeholders. Besides food production, the farm is a learning site for subjects like horticulture and animal husbandry. At the school farm, we do practicals for horticulture and for animal husbandry, where we teach students to milk cows manually and mechanically. In addition, there is a space for our students to learn about agricultural production, by transplanting trees and even growing their own vegetables for marks as projects on basic farming skills. I understand how important such life skills are to African children, as I was raised by peasant farming parents.*

In schools without farms, gardens can be planted with the aim of producing food for the school and creating a new learning environment for subjects such as horticulture (Pranis, 2010). In addition, farms or gardens offer opportunities for students to develop life skills such as planning, planting nutritious vegetables and fruits, tending their growth, and harvesting and storing them. Shining Star wished to equip students with practical life lessons about using their hands and their land to produce their own food sustainably rather than buying. Shining Star's LFL practices in maximising the available resources reflect

one of the three premises of LFL — how the social lives of individuals, especially their formative experiences, contribute to the school head's LFL practices (Hallinger, 2011). Shining Star's personal knowledge, beliefs and values, including his experience of peasant farming, informed his desire to offer horticulture as an official school subject, resulting in a key to variation in his LFL practice.

6.2.4.2 Staffroom and swimming pool spaces

Martyr inspired by her meanings and understanding of herself as a mother, a negotiator and an organiser, also maximised the available spaces and facilities in the school to benefit her leadership and student achievement:

> *The staffroom does not only house teachers but is a place where I sit and meet with the teachers and discuss what should happen and plan with them together as a teaching body how we want to see our teaching activities shaping up or how we can bring the best out of our students. I propose some ideas to them and they do also contribute towards these ideas in terms of what they think will be the best given their suggestions together we put our focus for the term and for the year as a team or group.* […]
>
> *As a school we have gone the extra mile to install a heated swimming pool, becoming one of the few schools to have one in the country. This swimming pool has brought a lot of success for the school. We have done extremely well in our league and have won trophies. The heated swimming pool has been an added advantage in getting our school to raise its standards, so we take a lot of pride in our swimming pool and the joy it has brought to the whole school.*

Maximising the available spaces can improve teaching and learning. Martyr uses the staffroom as a place to collaboratively implement school improvement plans with the teachers. During their discussions on school improvement, they collectively formulate and refine the school vision, by, for example, identifying strategies to be implemented and ways of monitoring these strategies, evaluating progress, and agreeing on time frames (Fernandez, 2011). This is in line with one of the key roles of a leader for learning: to set a clear vision and identify goals that need to be collaboratively achieved by all

stakeholders. Effective leaders for learning do this by including the teachers and other stakeholders, and by monitoring them and performing cyclical evaluations as often as necessary. Martyr's investment in a heated swimming pool corresponds with the need for school heads as leaders for learning to invest in the improvement of school facilities. Such investments in facilities have a number of positive impacts on individual stakeholders and the school as a whole. Although investments in school infrastructure may seem expensive at first, they are always worthwhile as they usually accrue lifetime gains (Jones, Axelrad & Wattigney, 2007).

6.2.4.3 Assembly point, notice board and school hall spaces

Chameleon's LFL practices are informed by his understanding of himself as a role model, a hard worker and a leader who embraces collectivism. He aims to motivate stakeholders to excel in all they do, be it sports, academics or embracing a spirit of competition and success.

> *At the assembly point we also address students and relay information to them about discipline, neatness and attendance, and we check on these aspects too by conducting inspections. It is a meeting point for students, teachers and administrators to interact and share the same vision of where the school has to go. In addition, we call the school hall the motivational room, since it is where students write their final examinations. As a school, we always tell students during our church services to make us proud and to keep the standards of excellence high. Our school is known for the high achievements in public examinations. We also use assemblies to arrange the students according to their academic positions at the end of each school term, so that they are motivated to change their current position. The hall is viewed as both a spiritual and an academic house.*

Chameleon understands that motivation is the key to achieving the desired school performance and to establish a competitive advantage. He uses various places and spaces within the school to reach out to and motivate stakeholders, such as the school assembly point, the notice board and the school hall. Usher (2012) asserts that educating, inspiring and motivating students is the combined responsibility of the school and the parents, and Hallinger and Heck (1996, 2000) find that effective LFL is attainable through academic

structures or processes that improve team work and cooperation among staff, and minimise conflict to harness synergies. This is exactly what Chameleon is implementing, by involving students using different school platforms and spaces, so that they are motivated to excel. This concurs with Usher's (2012) finding that the organisation of school structures has an indirect impact on stakeholders' interactions and relationships, and hence their motivation.

6.2.4.4 Classroom space

Rainbow was uniquely inspired by his understanding of himself as a Good Shepherd, who brings out the best in people and who maximises the available school resources to positively impact teaching and learning, particularly in the classroom:

> *In our school, we take pride in our classrooms being centres of learning. We have replaced broken furniture with new furniture, and replaced the chalkboards with modern, interactive whiteboards. We have also installed an Internet connection for the school so that teachers can access it any time to research information and share it with students, for example YouTube videos on particular topics being taught. We have introduced computers into the staff room so that teachers can prepare PowerPoint presentations to present their lessons more effectively in the classroom. We are ensuring that we provide our students with an education that is relevant to the current times. The use of computers also prepares our students for the tertiary or university studies, where most of the learning platform is digitised.*

One of the characteristics of Good Shepherds is that they are relevant to the people they lead because they meet the people's needs. As such, Rainbow adopted and implemented new technologies in his school, thus transforming the classrooms into modernised learning spaces and places. School heads need to initiate improvements to their schools' infrastructure and resources (often termed "academic improvement capacity"), for example technologies that improve the implementation of the curriculum, in order to influence leadership and learning positively (Hallinger, 2011). Rainbow's introduction of Internet access to the school was a great contribution to the improved learning of the students, and of all the school stakeholders. The benefits that accrue to schools that have

Internet access include the ready accessibility of all kinds of up-to-date knowledge in multiple formats — text, image, audio and video — which helps teachers to offer good explanations and illustrations of various concepts in different ways to suit their students' different learning styles. The introduction of such a game-changing technology brings a systemic change to the school (Fullan, 2001) that will produce greatly improved performance, as it has a direct impact on all its users (all the stakeholders, but primarily teachers and students). Internet access that is delivered through fast, secure Wi-Fi enables teachers to maximise its value in their classrooms (Acharya, Manohar, Wu, Maxim & Hansen, 2018). Access to multimedia information means that students can engage with content using more creative approaches and activities, which enhance their understanding of the material and their learning, and which can translate into better academic performance.

The school heads seemed to understand the importance of school resources such as land, facilities and learning environments (the spaces and places of teaching and learning). These serve multiple purposes, and are able to offer new learning opportunities to students. According to Lefebvre (1991, p. 31) each school "produces a space, its own space". School heads as leaders for learning are encouraged to be transformative in nature through their vision, mission and goals. Visionary leaders are seen as transformational in nature (Hallinger, 2011). With clearly shared objectives they can articulate frameworks that guide the adoption of programmes, resource allocation, and decisions on staffing, with the aim of broadening and maximising their available spaces and places to enhance learning (Hallinger, 2011). The schools themselves are societies, as they are made up of humans who are in a relationship in order to provide education to the students. Hence, the school heads should be bold and take some calculated or educated risks in creating their own unique learning spaces and places that enhance student learning. Learning for students should happen anywhere and everywhere, as shown by Guise (2017), who states that the best place to learn is not a place — it is all over the world.

6.2.5 Leadership underpinned by *hunhu*

Hunhu, or humaneness, is the essential goodness and love for others that distinguishes us from other animal species (Metz, 2011). *Hunhu* is a system of ethics from Zimbabwean

Shona culture that provides guidelines on how to conduct oneself in an acceptable way. *Hunhu* involves active collectivism, and mutual care and support through acknowledging the needs of others (Chinouya & O'Keefe, 2006). Starratt (2012, p. 51) identifies the importance of care in his discussion of the three key ethical approaches — "ethics of justice, care, and critique" — that school heads as leaders for learning have to adopt to make schools better places for teaching and learning. Ethics of care are established through relationships, and promote love and respect towards other people (Metz, 2011). Ethics and *hunhu* are part of the set of values that school heads in leading learning need to encourage all stakeholders to uphold, promote and use as a benchmark in improving student learning (Hallinger, 2011). This can inspire other stakeholders to create a caring environment based on *hunhu* values, which can improve the performance of all stakeholder (Cherkowski, Walker & Kutsyuruba, 2015). Martyr's LFL practices as a school head display some elements of *hunhu*, based on her understanding of caring, love and nurturing, and on her strong family values, as shown below:

> *In my school, teachers also take joy and pride in noting that the school head's office is always open when they arrive. I do this so that I am able to greet them, welcome them and find out how they and their families are. This allows them to go to class feeling that they have been welcomed by me, and shows them that I care not only about their professional lives but also about their personal welfare, which makes us more connected at a personal level. This also gives them a sense of oneness and family, where we all feel that we belong and can confide in one another if we have problems. I base my leadership on 'hunhu', which informs my strong interpersonal relationships that involve all stakeholders, be they parents, teachers or students, and that are mutually formed on 'hunhu' principles of respect and trust.*

Martyr leads learning according to the *hunhu* principles of love, care, respect and trust. She values teachers and students' professional and personal lives through strong relationships based on mutual trust. Her *hunhu* shows how she connects with people at a personal level, and how this brings the whole school together and promotes a sense of ownership. Martyr also views the school as a family, where relationships are built with strong bonds that connect people at different levels (personally, cognitively, spiritually and emotionally). This is in line with how school heads as leaders for learning should

demonstrate a *hunhu* ethic of care. It taps into the emotions of stakeholders, strengthening their relationships and fostering an environment where all members are valued and respected in the school (Noddings, 2005). Hallinger (2011) notes that school heads as leaders for learning should collaboratively formulate, model, nurture and promote the "instrumental values" needed to achieve the school's goals. Martyr uses her cultural tradition of *hunhu* as an LFL resource to create a school where relationships are valued. Respect and care are the basis for harnessing the benefits of interconnectedness and increasing the output of all school stakeholders.

Chameleon, whose LFL is also informed by *hunhu*, also focuses on the teachings of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius. Chameleon's meanings and understandings foreground the importance of humanity, collectivism and relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. These have a positive impact on his LFL practices. The principles of Confucianism relate to being human, morality, correctness, understanding and truth (Chou, Tu & Huang, 2013). Havens (2013) notes that Confucianism, as part of the Chinese culture itself, emphasises collectivism, meaning that in every decision and action, the potential societal benefits take precedence over individual gain. It is also worth noting that Confucianism is defined as a system of ethics (Needham, 1970, pp. 24–5) that is necessary for good governance and a cultured life for both individuals and leaders, as it governs behaviour, emotions, morality, symbolic rituals and everyday activities (Metz, 2011). This resonates with the literature on LFL, which notes that values shape the thoughts and behaviours of school heads, and potentially offer a basis for their leadership (Hallinger, 2011). Chameleon's *hunhu* LFL practices make him a moral agent, who establishes and sustains a moral and ethical culture in the school:

> *Leadership is about maintaining righteous ways of life and actions, so that you can achieve what you want to achieve in the school. Schools should be for the benefit of the students' education, and not for personal gain or profit through corruption, nepotism, looting and embezzlement of school funds. As a leader, you should be approachable, should not refuse other people's contributions, and should value and respect other stakeholders. In the process, you will learn from others and also earn their trust, because they will feel that you welcome their input and support them.*

Chameleon is informed by Confucianism, a way of life governed by truth, high morals and a love for humanity, which has become the basis of his *hunhu* LFL. He does everything for the greater good of others and not for personal gain. As a leader for learning, he believes in doing good. In gaining people's trust, he shuns corruption and as it destroys both the school leader's and the school's reputation. For Chameleon, it is all about upholding morals and values. Hallinger (2011) finds that each school has its own unique culture characterised by values that inform the decisions and actions taken, consciously or subconsciously, in leading learning. Therefore, achieving success as a leader for learning requires "doing right things right" (Leithwood, 2005, p. 3). These *hunhu* LFL practices are what make Chameleon a successful leader for learning who is accountable for his own actions, for the learning of all stakeholders and for the whole school's performance.

6.3 SHINING STAR'S CAPITALIST LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRACTICES

The school heads have different personal and professional meanings and understandings as leaders for learning, which produce their unique LFL practices. Shining Star's LFL practices that distinguish him from the other schools heads are discussed below. Scott (2006, p. 1) defines capitalism as "a system of governance for economic affairs that has emerged in different settings and continues to evolve over time". He also describes the features of capitalism as a high degree of competitiveness in the markets, the right to use labour, land and capital to make a profit, and the necessity of entrepreneurial roles for organisations to succeed (Scott, 2006). According to these features, Shining Star could be described as a capitalist, as he employs some of these approaches in his LFL.

6.3.1 Creating and sustaining healthy competition among school stakeholders

As mentioned above, competition and competitiveness are key for organisations, including schools, to survive in a capitalist economy, and for them to retain their relevance. In addition, the world is a highly competitive place, and people's desire to surpass others often brings out the best in them (Srikrishna, 2017). Verhoeff (1997)

describes the benefit of competition in the school environment as its ability to challenge participants to give of their best, thereby enhancing student motivation and learning. Srikrishna (2017) concurs that in schools, healthy competition keeps stakeholders highly motivated and productive, which benefits them individually and the school as a whole. This resonates with Hall and Hord (2002), who see the key role of school heads as leaders for learning as being "gatekeepers" who are there to monitor and manage the institution and its values. Shining Star's understanding of himself as a role model, mentor and innovative leader who strives for a better school, allows him to utilise healthy competition to the advantage of the school. The following are various LFL practices Shining Star implements in his school to promote healthy competition amongst the school stakeholders.

> *The picnic has promoted house identification, a spirit of teamwork among the students in each house, a spirit of competition, and a desire to win amongst all the students. This has the benefit of maintaining the school's high standards in terms of academics, smartness and discipline. […]*
>
> *The prize-giving is an important ritual or ceremony to honour, acknowledge, and recognise individuals who have done exceptionally well academically, in sports and in other extra-curricular activities like drama, singing and debates. The teachers who have produced the best results over the course of the year and who have the most-improved results are recognised and honoured too. In addition, other members of staff that have contributed to the well-being of the students and the success of the school are honoured. This motivates all stakeholders to work hard to keep the school standards high and to protect the image and reputation of the school through excellence.*

Shining Star believes in healthy competition among stakeholders as a way to uphold the school's excellence standards. He also promotes teamwork amongst both students and teachers, through reinforcing and rewarding behaviours. This includes honouring high-achieving individuals, thereby promoting healthy competition. This is in line with Srikrishna (2017), who identifies value systems and reward systems as key contributors to healthy competition. In addition, school heads as leaders for learning should foster and nurture healthy competition, as a positively competitive atmosphere inspires stakeholders to grow, explore, try new things, collaborate, learn and achieve (Cantador & Bellogín,

2012). The promotion of healthy competition in schools is key for students to improve their learning and to excel.

6.3.2 Investing in teachers as a resource: professional capital through exchange programmes

In the initial definition of capitalism provided above, capital is emphasised as a key asset that a capitalist has to invest in order to earn a profit. Shining Star invests in teachers as resources, and this is a form of "professional capital", a term that is borrowed from business economics and is based on the definition of capital being something that adds value to one's net worth (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). Hargreaves and Fullan (2013) note that if school heads want results and want to realise returns like businesspeople do, then they need to invest in humans. Human capital development in education means the improvement of the productivity of the current stock of teachers or heads (Hansen & Alewell, 2013). Professional capital is equivalent to "capacity building" in leadership research (Hallinger, 2011). Shining Star, based on his understanding of himself as a mentor and innovative leader who strives for a better school through excellence, exhibits the following LFL practices that seem to promote professional capital in his school:

> *Currently one teacher is going to the United States of America on an exchange programme, from the beginning of September until the end of October. He is going to experience First World teaching and learning for a couple of months, with the aim of learning key practices that could enhance the learning of all of our own stakeholders. He will visit some polytechnic colleges and universities and engage with scholars who have proposed models that schools could adopt to enhance the integration of ICT in schools. This teacher will become our resource person, as he will be able to induct and professionally develop others in the basics of integrating ICT into our day-to-day teaching and learning, as well as into our administrative duties. It will make life easier for all of us, especially when teachers are sharing information, knowledge and skills. Therefore, we are also using him as a link person with the ZCHPC.*

The success of Shining Star's school is based on his "professional capital" or human resources, as he gives teachers the chance to acquire knowledge on behalf of the school,

in order for them to act as a resource for professionally developing others. Some are sent as far as the United States of America to be equipped to teach or develop other staff members. Fullan (2001), a key scholar, asserts that leaders for learning should strive for school, organisational and systems reforms, including incorporating ICT into schools that need transformation. Transformation is needed for organisational reform, as it calls for the development of structures that nurture shared leadership with others. Fullan (2001, p. 21) states that "it has become increasingly clear that leadership at all levels of the system is the key lever for reform, especially leaders who focus on capacity building and develop other leaders who can carry on".

Shining Star also allows those with the necessary expertise to lead in areas where he is not well-equipped to do so, thereby promoting shared LFL practices within the academic staff. This ensures the building of professional capital, as individual stakeholders and departments invest in learning as part of development to meet the school's needs and vision (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Shining Star gives teachers a chance to lead in professional development sessions, which emphasises how teachers have multiple roles in addition to being class leaders, and these roles include teacher, instructional leader, academic mentor and instructional team developer (Chenoweth, 2007). Most importantly, however, through their instruction in class teachers contribute effectively to the academic performance of students in schools (Odden & Kelly, 2008). Thus school heads as leaders for learning should lead professional capital development in their schools by focusing primarily on the development of their teachers' instructional skills and abilities, as these have a directly positive impact on the students' learning, and hence their academic achievements.

6.3.3 Harnessing the benefits of social capital through organisational networks beyond the school sphere

In the definition of capitalism, capital is mentioned as an important aspect but it can take different forms, such as land, labour and money. In his school, Shining Star capitalises on social capital, which is constituted by key relationships between school stakeholders that enhance teaching and learning, and that lead to the sharing of various forms of capital in the organisations due to the forged personal bonds (Daly, Moolenaar, Bolivar & Burke,

2010). The importance of social capital in organisations is emphasised by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010), who indicate that in this rapidly changing world there is a need for interconnectedness. In addition, the LLM acknowledges that school heads as leaders for learning, and their schools, do not operate in isolation but rather in an open system (Hallinger, 2011). The relationships that school heads have in and outside of the school context presents both threats and opportunities to their LFL effectiveness. His assessment of the wider school environment, with the aim of achieving a better school as part of his meanings and understandings, led Shining Star to identify ICT opportunities from his interactions with other organisations. He achieved this through leadership networks that offered support for the learning of all stakeholders in the school through ICT implementation. Shining Star's LFL practices are evident through this capitalisation on social and organisational networks beyond the school to support teaching and learning:

> *I went to the Zimbabwe Centre for High Performance Computing (ZCHPC) with Brother Themba and three school board members with the idea of trying to improve our technology through a partnership and collaboration with the ZCHPC. They conducted a pilot programme for the digital library at our school, the first in the province, and trained the teachers to help integrate information and communications technology (ICT) into the day-to-day implementation of the curriculum. We also work in partnership with the Solom Foundation, which donated the computers, tablets and digital content materials for the students.*

Shining Star is a school head who goes beyond the school to network and create social relationships with organisations in the private sector that are beneficial to the school and to student learning. This corresponds with Hoppe and Reinelt (2010)'s assertion that inter-organisational leadership networks are key in seeking support from other organisations with shared interests, which can result in schools delivering services to students more efficiently. Shining Star managed to access the resources from ZCHPC to set up the digital library to meet the current world technological trends in school because of the relationship he developed with them beforehand. This alludes to the need for school heads to embrace methods of modern learning that keep their organisations relevant in meeting students' educational needs (Hallinger, 2011).

6.4 MARTYR'S FEMININE LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRACTICES

The school heads have different personal and professional meanings and understandings as leaders for learning, resulting in their unique LFL practices. Below is Martyr's LFL practices that distinguish her from the rest of the other schools heads. Noddings (1984) wrote a ground-breaking manuscript titled "Caring: a feminine approach to ethics and moral education". Her premise was that naturally women are predominantly carers in any society and history provides enough evidence to support her claims (Bergman, 2004). Borrowing from the above assumptions I see some feminine qualities of LFL coming out in the leadership practices of Martyr as a female school head and leader for learning.

6.4.1 A female instructional leader who capitalises on an embodied type of leadership based on visibility, confidence and exemplary behaviour

Noddings (2002) calls women "natural caring beings", and states that when female leaders care for learning this becomes the first step in moral education (Nodding, 2002). Traditionally in African culture, ideas of leadership are linked to virility and are biased towards men as better leader, while women are considered followers and are referred to as the "weaker sex". (Maseko, 2013). Fritz and Van Knippenberg (2017) also describe how previously women were subject to personality stereotypes that assume they have a lack of self-appreciation and low confidence levels, and that they settle for mediocrity as their ambition levels are low. However, this is directly the opposite of what Martyr's LFL practices seem to be. As a leader for learning, Martyr is a female instructional leader who capitalises on her confidence and visibility, and leads by example to impact positively on student learning.

> *My leadership each day starts with being punctual. I am the first person to arrive at school and I arrive on time as a way of leading by example and becoming a role model. My presence and confidence are my key strengths, as they help to organise people, time and resources. I have done this faithfully so that the teachers can get the students to do the same. I have encouraged them to be on time for school and for their classes. My presence helps teaching and learning to take place at the scheduled times, thus minimising teaching time lost due to lateness or absenteeism.*

Martyr as a school head uses her confidence and presence to get things done. Her presence is felt by her coming in early, which sets the pace for how the teachers should start their day. This inspires everyone to come in early and teaching begins on time. Minimum time is lost due to lateness and absenteeism, which helps to protect meaningful teaching and learning time. She models with confidence acceptable behaviours, demonstrating that actions speak louder than words. Martyr's LFL practices mentioned above qualify her as a distinguished leader. Smulyan (2000) recognises leaders for learning as those who maximise instructional time with the students in order for them to get the best academic assistance from the contact times with their teachers. This is exactly what Martyr is doing, as she uses her presence to create a positive climate and to protect instructional time. This is in line with Day, Gu and Sammons' (2016) finding that leaders for learning follow certain key practices: establishing a presence, and taking an active role through visibility, awareness and the promotion of mutual relationships amongst all school stakeholders. This explains why Martyr values being so visible in the school, as it enables her to effectively be involved in the day-to-day running of the school, and to build relationships with other stakeholders.

6.4.2 Mothering style of leadership in the school

Women are care-giving beings and mothering comes naturally to them (Bergman, 2004). Due to their feminine qualities, especially their ability to mother, women are generally care-givers at home and as leaders in schools. Mothering is "a socially constructed set of activities and relationships involved in nurturing and caring for people" (Glenn, Brown & Forcey, 1994, p. 357), and "caring is part of the world of women" (Tarlow, 1996, p. 56). In addition, mothering is emotionally powerful, and when women school heads assume a mothering role in schools, it influences how they relate to stakeholders and hence their leadership (Lumby & Azaola, 2014). This has led some scholars to argue that female school heads offer certain unique traits, related to caring and mothering, that men usually do not offer in schools (Fritz & Van Knippenberg, 2017). Hallinger (2011) describes the importance of a leader's personality in determining how they exercise their role in schools (Hallinger, 2011). Martyr's meanings and understandings of family life and of how a woman should behave, and also how her formative experiences of her sister and mother caring for her, loving her and nurturing her, inform how she leads learning in the school. Martyr's mothering leadership style emphasises caring for the students and a family atmosphere, which are key for the students' fullest development:

> *I am a dignified woman who is a figure of authority and a mother, and also the school leader. I choose life because running the school means I am doing something that is life giving. Another aspect of my vision for the school is that it includes all stakeholders as a happy family. Heads and teachers should aim to understand today's students through caring, and through understanding the students' background and families. This is key for schools to be able to cater for students' needs, including creating a conducive environment for meaningful teaching and learning. Our students come from different family backgrounds. Some come from happy families, while others are being raised by single parents who are struggling. Yet others are from child-headed families, but happy families create happy students. This is what I have noticed in our school. We cater for students who come from broken families and try to build a family life for them in the school so that they do not feel lost or left out.*

Martyr is a school head who seems to have a great deal of motherly love, and who views the school as a family where all members, especially students, should feel at home, and

should feel safe and secure. When students feel loved, safe and secure, they are more likely to work hard and try to make their teachers and parents happy. Martyr also sees herself as a school head and leader for learning who is a dignified woman and mother, and whose main duty in the school is to give life to students through being there for them, and through nurturing their abilities and talents into careers. This is in line with Tarlow (1996), who states that positive relationships between children and their mothers display love and care. In addition, Tarlow (1996, p. 56) states that "caring as experienced in the family has come to act as the metaphor and standard for all forms of caring", including in schools. Another recent study by Zulu (2017) finds that caring is a form of power and is a feminine quality that school leaders as leaders for learning need, regardless of gender, to transform schools into caring communities. School heads can only achieve school success and effective educational performance by adopting principle aligned with care and nurturing, as it has been shown that without a caring school head, successful LFL and management are impossible (Zulu, 2017).

6.5 CHAMELEON'S TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRACTICES

The school heads have different personal and professional meanings and understandings as leaders for learning, which produce their unique LFL practices. Below are Chameleon's LFL practices that distinguish him from the other schools heads. According to Graburn (2000, p. 1), "tradition refers both to the process of handing down from generation to generation, and somethings, custom, or thought process that is passed on over time". According to the above definition, Chameleon comes across as someone who values his African culture and practices, such as the *dare*, a cultural practice and tradition that he embraced as it was passed on to him from his father.

6.5.1 Adopting the African indigenous strategy of *dare* in the school

As an African man, Chameleon embraces his tradition by practising the *dare* system in his school. African traditional systems of leadership rely heavily on consensual decision-making, as evident by the following examples: "the Ibo village assembly in eastern Nigeria, the Eritrean village *baito* (assembly), the *gada* (age-set) system of the Oromo in Ethiopia and Kenya, as well as the council of elders (*kiama*) of the Kikuyu in Kenya" (Mengisteab, 2006, p. 3). These African traditional ways of making decisions are still found in Zimbabwe, in the form of the *dare* system, which Chameleon participated in and observed in his formative years. Hoste and Anderson (2010) state that in most traditional communities decision making provides a form of consensus and ownership of options, and allows all participants to be able to influence the services and issues that affect people. This promotes inclusion through having a voice and being able to speak out on matters that affect one's wellbeing. In relation to education, Hallinger (2011) states that shared leadership under LFL includes actions, methods or structures that allow all stakeholders to actively participate in leading the school. In addition, "significant changes demanded of schools can only be attained through shared decision making that encourages people to change and to address educational problems" (Bradshaw & Buckner, 1994, p. 79). Chameleon's meanings and understandings of collectivism, and his experiences of attending the *dare,* inform his need for consensus-based decision making in his school, a traditional decision-making system where people's voices are valued as they are in distributed LFL. Chameleon's LFL practice that incorporates *dare*-style decision making values the importance of other stakeholders' contributions to decision making, and gives equal attention to all:

> *In my school I promote platforms, especially in the staffroom, a place where teachers can express themselves without being victimised (the idea banking concept). It is also a place where professional learning communities are formed and where sharing of information and communication is promoted with each other and activities to be done as a school. This is a place where after presenting tasks to teachers they would digest the information to come up with various or different ideas or ways of doing things. I use the 'dare' system where teachers as experts should have a voice in matters that concern them, including decision-making, although as the head I also have the final say in some matters.*

Informed by his childhood experiences of going to the *dare* with his father, Chameleon uses the same system in his school. He values teachers and their expertise, as their input in decision making as a collective contributes to a better school, although he has the last say as the school head. He also encourages the use of the staffroom as an idea-generation platform where teachers are allowed to air their views without fear of being victimised, as they are entitled to debate and deliberate on issues in the same way as at the *dare*. This model can be adopted in schools by heads as leaders for learning because of its key characteristics regarding the decision-making process: it is inclusive, participatory, co-operative and solution-oriented (Hoste & Anderson, 2010). This is also in line with literature on LFL that states that participatory decision making has increasingly become the agreed-upon model around the world for the operation of schools, as such democratic decision-making makes then more efficient (Mokoena, 2011). This is exactly what Chameleon as a school head does in his school, through the *dare* decision-making system as a leader for learning.

6.6 RAINBOW'S FACILITATOR LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRACTICES

The school heads had different personal and professional meanings and understandings as leaders for learning, which produced their unique LFL practices. Below are the LFL practices that distinguished Rainbow's from the other school heads. In relation to facilitation, Biggs (2011, in Bye, 2017) states that "the teacher must create a learning environment that facilitates learning activities that in turn make the students achieve the desired learning outcomes", while Ahmed (2015) notes that teacher as facilitators are vital for helping students to take responsibility for their own learning. Rainbow's leadership can be described as facilitative leadership for learning, as he ensures that all learners get equal opportunities to learn, regardless of their gender, and also uses his Christian background to prepare students to make informed decisions later in life.

6.6.1 Breaking down oppressive gender hierarchies by challenging traditional norms to promote girl-child access in education

As a facilitator, Rainbow's leadership at his school reflects how he believes that both genders should have equal opportunities to learn. This is in line with global United Nations policies aimed at developing the world by promoting gender equality and empowering women, and is clearly embedded in the education systems of most countries, including Zimbabwe (Lomazzi, Borisch & Laaser, 2014). Simmonds (2014) explains the need to focus on gender equality and empower women in developing educational contexts if gender equality is to be attained. This relates to Starratt's (2012) emphasis on the ethics of justice as crucial to ethical approaches for school leadership, which involves a focus on fair and equal opportunities for students, regardless of gender. According to Wolk (2000), school heads as leaders for learning should define their role by answering the question, "what do we want from our schools and students?" To answer this question there is a need to define and prioritise the school's "terminal values", or what it stands for, and advocating for equity in learning should be part of those values (Hallinger, 2011). Reflecting the meaning of his traditional name, Munyaradzi ("consoler" or "comforter"), Rainbow's LFL practices challenge traditional patriarchal norms to promote girls' access to education in a bid to promote an ethics of justice:

> *The words "It's a man's world" echo in education because there has been a vicious circle of gender stereotyping and bias that has been linked to men being dominant and better than women in most things in society, in the work place and in leadership. This is something we have agreed as a school to transform in order to promote gender equity, and that we promote with our stakeholders, especially the students, who are encouraged to respect each other regardless of their gender. In schools, when students choose their subjects we need to remove certain stereotypes and prejudices that cause certain subjects to be seen as "masculine" and others as "feminine". We need to encourage female students to do the more scientific subjects such as mathematics, physics and chemistry, as well as the commercial subjects like accountancy, business studies and economics, all of which were stereotyped as predominantly "male" subjects. We need female students to be prepared for careers as engineers, doctors, pilots, lawyers, accountants and managers, which used to be seen as careers for men only. We*

also need men to respect women and see them as equals, because women are very important since they are the ones who give birth to humankind.

As a school head Rainbow understands the importance of education as an agent for societal, educational and workplace change, particularly in regard to the position of women. As a leader for learning, he advocates and promotes equal access to education, and gives all students an equal chance to choose what they want to pursue in life, rather than be limited to the previously stereotypical "feminine" and "masculine" careers. This is a way to motivate female students with the idea that they can also become leaders and have equal opportunities to men. The above concurs with Simmonds (2014), who discusses the importance of an educational gender policy framework that emphasises gender equality, thus providing both men and women with a fair chance to succeed in life. Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women is also seen as an effective way to combat poverty, hunger and disease, and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable (United Nations Department of Public Information, 2009). School heads as leaders for learning are an important part of this policy, as they function in an "open system" that comprises their community, their social culture and institutional systems, which are constantly in interaction (Hallinger, 2011). It is through these interactions that school heads as leaders for learning can adopt a gender-inclusive approach in their schools to improve all students' learning. LFL and curriculum implementation complement each other as agents of change in improving gender equality and empowerment, and hence academic achievement in schools.

6.6.2 Promoting the Biblical Good Shepherd style of educational leadership

Decisions made today have implications for the future, and as a Christian and also a facilitator of lifelong learning Rainbow chooses to act as a guide and mentor for the students, by facilitating their citizenship education. In the Bible, David as a shepherd provided constant care to his sheep, who were helpless, defenceless and in constant need of a protector who would fight for them, guard them, and find them pasture and quiet pools (Wessels, 2014). Rainbow's meanings and understandings as a Christian inspire him to see himself as good shepherd like David. In the school as a leader for learning, he equates the students to sheep that are under his watchful eye of loving, trustworthy and

caring guidance (Wessels, 2014). The caring and loving Shepherd has qualities that fall under the ethic of care, where relationships are based on love and respect for other people (Stratt, 2012). As role models, teachers and other educational leaders remain accountable not only to administrators but to the Lord Himself, as they carry an awesome responsibility to train future generations of productive citizens (Maxwell, 2007). Rainbow's personal knowledge, beliefs, values, and experiences are key to the variations in his LFL practices (Hallinger, 2011). Being a Christian has influenced his LFL practices as a Good Shepherd like David.

> *As a Christian, I see my job as a teacher and school head as a calling beyond my job description. I am a Good Shepherd who is there to give life to students and guide them towards the greener pastures of life, beginning with being responsible citizens who respect life, respect other people's human rights, and give back to the community. I also take time to mould the morals and spiritual lives of the students. This is important, since it contributes to good discipline, morals, and ethically acceptable behaviours on the part of the students. The gospel I usually preach in school assemblies also inculcates a hardworking ethic in the students, because I preach that God blesses those who help themselves. When I talk of appreciating life, I always tell the students that their bodies are the temple of God. They need to respect their bodies and abstain from sex before marriage to avoid unwanted pregnancy and sexual diseases, including HIV and Aids. I always encourage them to focus on their studies, especially the girls, because I do not want them to drop out of school. I need them to have a better life. I also talk to and advise students on the use and abuse of drugs, especially in their adolescence. This is a confusing stage of their lives, where they can either destroy or build their lives depending on the choices they make.*

Rainbow appears to go beyond academic learning to include moral, spiritual and citizenship education under his guidance as a Good Shepherd. He believes learning should equip students for life by preparing them to make meaningful lifelong decisions for themselves and to become productive members of society who lead a healthy life based on grounded morals. As a Christian and school head, he knows the importance of preparing students for the future as he equates them to sheep that need people like him who are prepared to lay down their lives for their better future. This is in line with Hester

and Killian's (2011, p. 96) description of educational leaders for learning as moral agents, "who have given attention to their own development of moral character, have taken on the responsibility of following the principles of ethics, have committed to ethical care for others, and have a sense of stewardship of others or of a principal cause". Rainbow, like David as a shepherd, observes closely in order to protect students from harm and from making bad decision that may affect their academic achievement and future. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) assert that school heads are leaders for learning who tend to have a solid set of personal ethics developed from their personal values and from their professional experiences as teachers prior to taking on an administrative role. Rainbow is exactly such an ethically motivated individual, who is inspired by his Christian beliefs to be a Good Shepherd who bases his leadership basing on an ethics of care.

6.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on commonalities across the participants' LFL practices and on their unique LFL practices that sustain and promote the learning of all school stakeholders, which is necessary for high student academic achievement in Zimbabwean secondary schools. The process of inductive analysis had identified various common and unique leadership practices.

One of the common leadership practices was that the participants were socially conscious leaders who demonstrated an awareness of the collective nature of the school social environment, and how human synergies and collective efforts produce positive results for all. This concurs with Hallinger's (2011) LFL model, which notes that schools do not operate in isolation rather in an open system that school heads need to tap into in order to harness its benefits and support learning in schools. All the participants also worked to create an emotionally safe environment for all stakeholders, and they valued their schools as "reflective communities" where individual stakeholders and groups of stakeholders reflect on and improve their teaching and learning practices. A key practice for leading learning demonstrated by the school heads was that they maximised the available schools resources, in terms of places and spaces, to derive the maximum value and output in terms of learning. Hallinger's (2011) LLM shows that leading learning should be systematic, strategic and "capitalist" in order to maximise output or learning performance. School

heads need to make decisions on behalf of everyone, but must incorporate their input to maximise learning. Lastly, all participants demonstrated leadership informed and underpinned by *hunhu*, a system of ethics from Zimbabwean Shona culture that involves active collectivism, and mutual care and support through acknowledging the needs of others. These commonalities informed the school head's leadership negatively or positively to ensure learning for all stakeholders and overall school achievement.

The meanings and understandings constructed by individuals through their lived experiences form the basis for how they conduct themselves personally and professionally, and for the school heads that these meanings and understandings informed how they practised their LFL. Some of the participants' unique individual practices borrowed from African and Chinese philosophies, and were informed by a social justice outlook. This showed that their LFL practices went beyond academic performance and growth to include spirituality and citizenship education. Others utilised social, academic and business relational interdependence to advance their vision, including investing in teachers as resources (known as human capital investment), which reflects the importance of human capacity in Hallinger's (2011) model. Leading learning in schools comes across as a human-driven process necessary for any school to achieve student learning and improvement. The participants drew spiritually from their African traditions and from Christianity to inform practices of nurturing and caring, which characterised them as individuals and as professionals. It was evident that the school heads' LFL practices were informed by both their personal and professional identities, which dictated their understanding and their decision making as leaders for learning.

The following final chapter presents the key learnings and understandings of the study, interpreted from the synthesised findings of the school heads' responses. These are discussed in response to the main research question: "What are the lived experiences of school heads as leaders for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" It also reflects on the methodology of the study, my theoretical contributions, and the implications for research, policy and practice, and makes suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 7
KEY LESSONS AND UNDERSTANDINGS FROM MY STUDY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

My research explored the narratives of four Zimbabwean school heads in order to understand how they lead learning. In the previous chapter, I highlighted the Zimbabwean school heads' common and unique LFL practices, or the various methods they utilise and promote to ensure that learning for all is a reality in their schools (Hallinger, 2011). Leading learning meant different things to the participants, and reflected their unique and multiple identities constructed through their different lived experiences. However, they had certain ideas in common about what LFL involves, and they all took the lead role in ensuring effective learning for all with the aim of attaining high academic achievement. They also understood LFL to include the learning of all stakeholders, especially teachers, to improve instruction and curriculum delivery, and thus the academic performance of students.

The school heads also showed unique individual LFL practices according to their different meanings and understandings of leading learning that were informed by their different personal and professional lived experiences. Their personal and professional meanings and understandings of self are intertwined, and make up "who they are" individually and as school heads. This study did not seek to generalise how Zimbabwean school heads lead learning, but rather gave voice to the stories of these heads who have managed to successfully lead their schools to being the highest rated schools in Manicaland province according to academic performance.

This chapter reviews the study as a whole and provides some methodological reflections. The lived experiences of the school heads are then summed up in relation to the three research questions. The key learnings of the study on Zimbabwean school heads as leaders for learning are presented, followed by suggestions for future research.

7.2 A REVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter One outlined my interest in the phenomenon of LFL, which was linked to my personal narrative as a former student in one of the top four academic achieving schools in Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe. This interest inspired me to seek the stories of my former school head, who leads an academically top-performing school in the province, as well as other heads of schools I believed were successfully leading learning. Their lived experiences became a lens through which I could try to understand how they lead learning. Narrative inquiry was deemed an appropriate method for addressing my primary research question: "What are the lived experiences of school heads as leaders for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" Narrative inquiry guided me to generate rich field texts that assisted me in addressing the secondary research questions. These texts were generated through narrative interviews and were supported by unique visual-arts-based methods (a collage and an artefact inquiry), complemented by a transect walk inquiry.

The theoretical underpinnings of the study, Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory (SIT) and Hallinger's (2011) leadership for learning model (LLM) were discussed in Chapter Two. SIT helped me to identify the different social groups and contexts that influenced the school heads' own learning, and their LFL. Hallinger's (2011) model was key for identifying other contextual factors within the schools that contributed to the school heads' LFL practices. This theoretical framework assisted me in understanding how the school heads' identities and their LFL practices were informed by both their personal and professional lives.

The selected study design and research methodology employed were discussed in Chapter Three, which focused primarily on narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry was considered the best method for establishing an understanding of the lived experiences of the school heads through their stories. It also allowed me to include unique visual and object-orientated research methods to generate data, such as collage inquiry, artefact inquiry and a transect walk. Narrative inquiry was able to capture how I as the researcher and the school heads experienced participating in the study, and required trust and honesty. These were key for unlocking the stories during the course of my interactions with the participants, as people who trust the researcher and the process feel free to share their personal and professional memories.

Chapter Four presented the initial stage of data analysis. This first level of data analysis involved analysing the participants' stories, and then "re-storying" them into a narrative that attempted to capture their lived experiences in a coherent story that was believable. The end products of this process were narratives of the school heads that provided an insight into their lived experiences and how they perceived themselves as individuals and school heads. These narratives answered the following question: "Who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools?" The Zimbabwean school heads narratives varied according to their unique individual lived experiences, their genders, the different families they grew up in, and their social contexts, such as their schools, colleges and workplaces. These different experiences produced different meanings and understandings of themselves as individual school heads. Within their varied lived experiences the school heads seem to share certain common meanings and understandings that were produced by their shared identities as Africans and Christians, by their love for education, and by important relationships with others in their personal and professional lives.

All the above gave the participants a basis for establishing their meanings and understandings of self, from which they had constructed a way of life and multiple identities which were constantly negotiated and intertwined, (personally as individuals and professionally as school heads). Zimbabwean school heads are individuals living a story that is constantly being written and rewritten through their past and present experiences that they negotiate to anticipate the future as individuals and leaders for learning in schools. The school heads are transformative individuals, with a vision of becoming better each day through formal educational advancement and through learning from their own experiences and from other, as shown in the qualities they possess. These school heads had multiple identities that needed to be constantly negotiated within the context, group, role and environment they found themselves in.

Chapter Five addressed the question, "What meanings and understandings of self do the school heads draw on as leaders for learning?" This analysis explored the school heads' personal and professional understandings and meanings of self as leaders of learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools through evidence in the form of thick descriptions. The personal and professional selves seem to interchangeably influence the participants' meanings and understandings as school heads. One's meanings and understandings of

self are based on one's lived experiences, aspirations and visions, role models, beliefs (cultural and religious) and group affiliations. These play out in one's social and professional lives as a school leader, and therefore informed how the school heads practised their LFL differently.

Chapter Six addressed the final research question: "How do the meanings and understandings shape their day-to-day practice of leadership for learning in schools?" The school heads' LFL practices were found to be directly influenced by their meanings and understandings of themselves as school heads. The LFL practices of the school heads were both role and personally oriented, and were constantly being negotiated and renegotiated. The school heads' personal and professional meanings and understandings were not static but were constantly changing and evolving, through reflective learning in the contexts in which they found themselves operating. Some of the practices were role-oriented LFL practices, such as supporting teaching and learning, promoting human interaction, and identifying and fostering synergies and interdependence, in order to improve teaching and learning in the school. Others were personally oriented LFL practices that aimed to promote the human well-being of all stakeholders, such as caring for and nurturing others, being considerate of the emotional and working conditions of all stakeholders, and paying attention to the moral and spiritual development of every student into a responsible citizen.

Because I chose narrative inquiry, a non-conventional methodology, to study the LFL practices of school heads in Zimbabwean schools, the following section is dedicated to my reflections on the methodology and on my process as a novice narrative inquirer.

7.3 METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

This study employed narrative inquiry as a research methodology, which is described by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 20) as "stories lived and told". The process of narrative inquiry, which involved narrative interviews that explored and re-storied the narratives of the school heads, was able to elicit important information on their key LFL practices, since their stories captured what they did. These stories are important, as there is a need to understand LFL differently. Kelly et al. (2004) explain that a lot of studies have managed to establish what good leadership practices are in general; however, not much

has been written on the everyday lives of good school leaders. As an ELMP researcher, I would encourage other colleagues to conduct narrative inquiries to understand through personal and professional stories what good leaders do, as stories explicitly describe their daily activities and capture their lived experiences. The re-storied lives of the school heads are a means of studying them in depth, and as human beings who are developing constantly evolving and complex relationships, not just with knowledge and leadership, but also with other human beings situated within institutional histories over time, and beyond the narrow domains of what sometimes counts as worth telling in LFL research.

The use of visual-arts-based and object-orientated methods, such as artefact inquiry, collage inquiry and transect walks, allowed my participants to reflect on and relate their past and present experiences, and how these informed their future as school heads and leaders for learning. These methods also assisted me in crystallising the school heads' personal and professional meanings and understandings of themselves in their stories, and encouraged me to see their experiences from different perspectives. These methods enhanced the trustworthiness of their narratives; however, I did not use them to validate the narratives, because in narrative inquiry there is no single truth to a story. Instead, a story is subject to multiple truths, and being aware of this helped me to avoid the dangers of a single story, as it can lead to bias (Adichie, 2014). As a result, I gathered multiple stories using the different methods mentioned above. Using different methods to generate data produced multiple stories for how each Zimbabwean school head led learning in their secondary schools. I later used these stories to collaboratively write a coherent narrative for and with each school head, in order to incorporate their multiple stories (see section 3.4).

Exercising leadership is a human experience that involves emotions. I therefore used the creative and arts-based research methods to generate rich data on the school heads' LFL experiences, because they allowed the participants to access and express a highly personal emotional subjectivity that would have been difficult to access through the use of questionnaires or interviews (Cohenmiller, 2018; Dunn & Mellor, 2017; Franz, 2010; Kara, 2015). Dunn and Mellor (2017, p. 294) find that artefacts assist in capturing certain emotions and cultural representations of participants that are sometimes not easily accessible through purely verbal narrations of their stories, as "some knowings cannot be conveyed through language". In this study, the participants' chosen artefacts, the collages

they made, and the transect walk activity that we undertook together, provided me with fresh approaches and different perspectives for understanding how Zimbabwean school heads lead learning.

In *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*, Clandinin (2013, p. 132) suggests that resonant threads are "particular plotlines that are threaded or woven over time and placed through an individual's narrative account". I have learnt that the re-storied lives of school heads are a powerful mediational force in everyday life, since they are both epistemological and phenomenological. The re-storied lives of the school heads have the power to shape what we know, how we experience the world, and what future actions we take (or do not take). The narratives or re-storied lives of the school heads are valuable and necessary, as they have the capacity to contribute to leadership and LFL research as intellectual work. They have also enabled me to tell stories about how I think we could teach novice school heads in educational leadership positions. I also learnt that listening to school heads' stories in their work context, and eliciting their experiences narratively, allowed me to learn about what happens behind the scenes of top academic achieving schools, and how the heads exercise LFL. The re-storied lives of the schools heads illuminated how we might better support school heads as they evolve and develop over time, and how we might learn about their professional identities, not just as teachers but also as scholars and working professionals (Gramer, 2017).

The field texts that were generated highlighted what it means for the school heads to lead learning in a Zimbabwean secondary school, as they captured narratives about their biographical details, their culture and their historical background. The storyboard technique allowed the participants to construct a narrative of their childhood, how they grew up, their formative years, their years of study and training, and their professional journey to becoming school heads, which including their experiences as teachers. This technique, which is borrowed from the film industry (Mitchell et al., 2011), allowed me to capture the broad social and work experiences that informed the personal and professional lives of school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools. The product was a visual narrative of each participant (with some text) that coherently presented a storyline of their lived experience by capturing key moments or periods in their lives. Implementing the storyboard technique as a thinking tool in the initial analysis phase ("narrative analysis" in Chapter 4) was a key methodology for this study.

7.4 LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE SCHOOL HEADS

My curiosity about this area of research was aroused by my own school head, who has led learning in the same school for the past decade and has developed the school into an academic powerhouse. My personal knowledge of this effectiveness inspired me to explore his lived experiences and those of other heads as leaders for learning. The primary research question was, "What are the lived experiences of school heads as leaders for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools?" The three secondary research questions that allowed me to break down the primary question are captured in Figure 7.1.

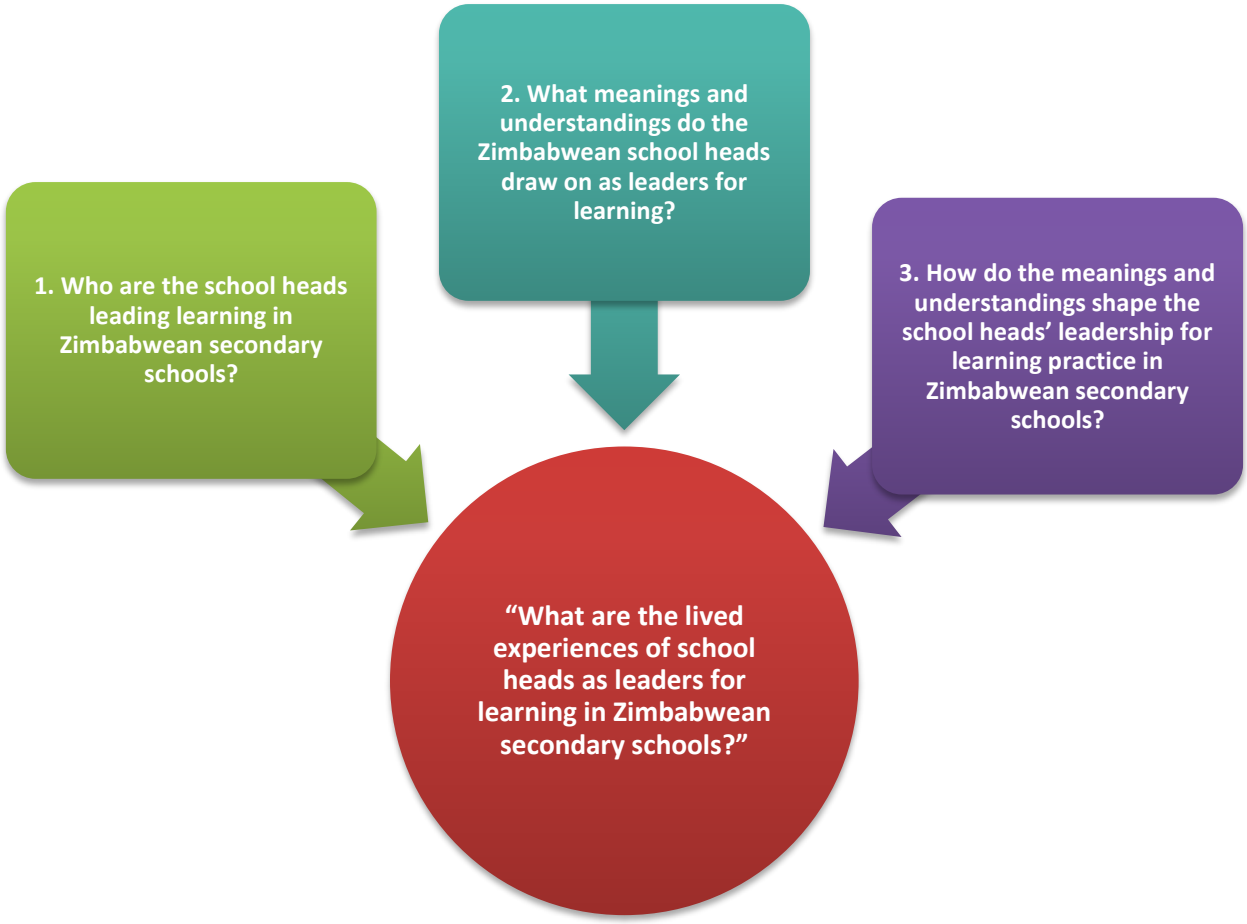


Figure 7.1 Conceptualisation of the research

7.4.1 Identities of the Zimbabwean school heads

I drew on SIT (Britzman, 1994) as the chosen theoretical perspective to inform my analysis in relation to the first secondary research question. The school heads' backgrounds, biographies, and past experiences in their native lands were key factors in "who" they are, and were presented in the form of a storied narrative that captured their key lived experiences as individuals. From these storied narratives, there are key lessons worth noting.

The school heads participated in social formations and social relations, where they found themselves belonging to or being categorised as part of certain social groups, such as their family, church, schools, peers, friends, and others. For example, the participants wore a range of identity labels, such as first born, son, daughter, group leader, volunteer, student, choir leader, student representative, and cattle herder. They were also multi-identified, which meant that they positioned themselves in multiple ways within their communities, groups and relationships. Martyr, for example, positioned herself as a daughter, a sister, a mother, a student, a student representative, and a choir leader, amongst other roles. The school heads considered their personal and professional lives to be inseparable, and performed multiple roles, duties and positions that were influential in attaining their desired outcomes. In assuming multiple positions in the school to execute their responsibilities, they draw on their professional and personal understandings and meanings of self, which in turn influence how they practise their LFL.

Identity arises from the social categories or groups that people affiliate to in society. These include one's country, one's family, one's gender, one's passions and interests (such as choir or mentorship groups), and one's beliefs (Hogg et al., 1995). In affiliating to certain groups, a certain identity is forged, which comes with certain sets of acceptable actions, behaviours and feelings to be adhered to by members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Trepte, 2006). A category that commonly identified the school heads was their Christian faith, which provided them with a moral compass for both their personal and professional lives. Their faith also inspired them to demonstrate the values or qualities of Christ, such as sacrifice, caring, trust and truth. The school heads' formative experiences at home, at school, at college and as professional teachers shaped their passions and interests, such as singing, organising, mentoring, and a love for education and learning, inspiring them to be lifelong learners.

The social context in which one grows up, such as one's family, contributes in many ways to "who" one is. For example, being a male first-born child in an African cultural context automatically meant that Shining Star had to assume responsibility as the family head at an early age when his father was absent. In addition, the patriarchal underpinnings of the social and traditional context in which the school heads grew up meant that gender was a factor that was also used to determine how one should behave, act and feel, as well as what one should aspire to and who one's role models would be. As males, Shining Star, Chameleon and Rainbow grew up aspiring to become like their fathers, some of whom were teachers and all of whom had a strong, independent work ethic, doing work that was located outside of the domestic environment. Martyr, as a female, saw her mother and sister as her role models, who taught her to care for others. Both of these formative perspectives were clearly informed by patriarchal norms and values, but these initial perspectives were modified later in the participants' lives. Martyr's role models shifted to men like Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama, and Shining Star and Rainbow demonstrated "feminine" caring qualities and advocated for gender equality as school heads and leaders for learning in their professional and personal capacities.

SIT also assisted me in understanding the self in relation to one's social context. Growing up in the African community means that boys are treated as men from an early age; for example, Shining Star assumed the role of head of the family in his father's absence, Chameleon attended the *dare* at an early age, and Rainbow too responsibility for herding the family's cattle at an early age. These experience inculcated certain lifelong values in them, such as responsibility, accountability and decisiveness. SIT enabled me to see the fluidity of identity in various contexts, how relationships shift in different contexts, and how meanings were created and re-created to inform who the Zimbabwean school heads are.

In conclusion, the Zimbabwean school heads are multi-identifiable, Christian, gendered, emotional, caregivers, decision makers, hard workers and learners, which forms the basis of their meanings and understandings as individuals, and their LFL practices. These identities of the school heads are constantly negotiated in relation to contexts, emotions, roles and responsibility, and are informed by their lived experiences. Their future aspirations of self mean that their "who" is transformative in nature, as it is constantly renegotiated through experiences towards their desired self as a leader of learning.

7.4.2 Meanings and understandings of self that inform Zimbabwean school heads' LFL practices

The narratives of the school heads were subjected to further analysis, where the school heads' stories captured their lived experiences from both a personal (family, religion, parents) and a professional (school, teacher, school leader) perspective. This concurs with Beauchamp and Thomas's (2009) teacher identity theory, which sees teacher identity as composed of both their personal and their professional identities, which are intertwined. The first key learning was that the meanings and understandings of the school heads were subjective, as they had different lived experiences. I concluded that the school heads have no uniform identity as leaders for learning, although they were all influenced by being African and Christian (Samuel, 2008).

To complement Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), I used Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory, which asserts that the identity of individuals is found in the meanings and understandings they accrue through their lived experiences. The school heads are therefore defined by both their "personal and professional identities" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Shining Star's personal identity of being the first born in the family produced meanings and understandings related to sacrifice, caring and adventurousness, which were exhibited in the form of instructional care and risk taking as a teacher and school head in his professional life. Martyr grew up in a patriarchal context, and her culture and gender therefore informed her personal meanings and understandings. She grew up in a family where the father was the ultimate authority, and protocol had to be observed in relation to him. She identified primarily with her mother and sister, who were her role models. Martyr exhibited the qualities she learnt in her family in her professional life as a teacher, such as being organised and caring for others, and she identified organisation as her particular strength. Her caring for others inspired her vision for a family-oriented school environment, and for a "life-giving" school. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) state that that passions of individuals also contribute to their identities, for example Martyr's passion for singing, which later informed her meanings and understandings of leading learning in schools to include music as a subject.

Furthermore, the school heads' lived experiences informed their understandings and meanings. Chameleon grew up in a traditional context, where people in the village related

to each other easily and boys were treated as men, and had to emulate their fathers. His personal meanings and understandings were informed by customs and by respect for culture, for human life and for other people's opinions (as shown in the traditional decision-making system of the *dare*). These personal meanings and understandings also stood out in his professional life as a teacher, where he believed in team work, delegation and the importance of relationships based on trust. Rainbow's personal meanings and understandings also stemmed primarily from his formative experiences, starting with his traditional name "Munyaradzi", meaning "comforter". As a comforter he was accountable for his actions at home and at school, which was also reflected in his professional life, where he established himself as a good listener in relation to other stakeholders. As a person he also stood up for those who were marginalised, especially female students, as he advocated strongly for gender equality in the school.

The common personal meanings and understandings that constituted the personal identity of the school heads implied that they are a product of their history, their community, and the civil and traditional settings they grew up in (Samuel, 2008). The personal meanings and understandings of the school heads were informed by their family experiences and interactions, their religious affiliations, the context in which they grew up (predominantly rural), and the historical and cultural experiences of the Zimbabwean people. This concurs with the statement that "it is through interaction between the person and the context that identity is formed" (Sutherland et al., 2010, p. 456). For example, being Christian meant that the participants adopted certain values in their personal and professional lives that uphold Christian values, such as honesty, care, trustworthy and fairness. Growing up in the African context meant that they based their personal and professional meanings and understandings on *hunhu*, an African principle that values human life, relationships, other people's opinions and collectivism. The participants' personal meanings and understandings clearly influenced their professional meanings and understandings, but the inverse also sometimes occurred. Certain professional situations, circumstances, relationships and interactions with stakeholders at school, especially with students, transformed the school heads' thoughts and identity personally.

In summing up the key lessons about the school heads' personal meanings and understandings, I argue that the school heads demonstrated transformative selves, constructed through identities negotiated in relation to their context, their emotions, and

their roles and responsibilities, and informed by their lived experiences, including what they aspire to become in the future. The evidence provided above indicates that the personal and professional identities of the school heads are inseparable, and sum up "who" they are as people. The LFL practices of the school heads are therefore informed by "who" they are — their identities and their lived experiences — as these are the basis of their personal and professional meanings and understandings.

7.4.3 Leadership for learning practices of Zimbabwean school heads

One key learning from this study on exploring the narratives of the Zimbabwean school heads was that their understandings and meanings, both personally and professionally, informed their LFL practices. This resulted in school heads enacting their LFL differently, since they had unique meanings and understandings of themselves. Samuel (2008, p. 8) alludes to this when he cites that "it is understood that no two teachers are identical in their experiences, personalities, training, and interpretations of their role as members of a community involved in the practice of teaching and learning". This meant that, as leaders for learning, the school heads exercised their LFL differently, but their schools achieved similar high academic standards.

Shining Star as a leader exercised a type of LFL that can be summed up as pragmatic LFL. His LFL practices are grounded in the realities of a situation and are solution based, as he confronts situations and uses the available resources (both human and capital resources) to maximise teaching and learning output to sustain school-wide success. Leaders who adopt a pragmatic leadership style rely on expertise (Higgs, 2017) and success in solving problems (Bedell-Avers, Hunter, & Mumford, 2008), and value logic. Shining Star communicates a vision of excellence that is practised through healthy competition within the school and is symbolised by his ICT implementation project, where he uses both professional human and social capital to benefit student learning. Using his past experiences, he maximises the use of learning spaces and places to make lessons fun (seen for example in his digitalised learning ICT investments, and in how he uses school facilities such as the swimming pool to enhance discipline and inculcate a spirit of competing and winning). The success of Shining Star's school is based on his careful reflection and reviewing, both of individuals and of the organisation as a whole.

He aims to improve and enhance student learning and academic achievement by using his judgment and by borrowing from what works for others to see if it works for his school too.

Martyr's unique LFL practices are based on *hunhu* leadership. Her strength lies in her ability to foster a life-giving school where all stakeholders are valued. Interpersonal relationships are at the core of her LFL, as she strives to create a caring, nurturing, loving and family-oriented school. *Hunhu* is a Zimbabwean term that conceptualises African culture as essentially a human one that demonstrates humility, care for others and equality (Muzvidziwa & Muzvidziwa, 2012). Muzvidziwa and Muzvidziwa (2012) note that *hunhu* allows people as individuals to express the importance of working together as a united front. It highlights people's common civilisation, and their collective and mutual subconscious oneness as Africans (Muzvidziwa & Muzvidziwa, 2012). Martyr's *hunhu* leadership practices include the use of welcoming gestures such as smiling, which are key to creating a caring, family-oriented school environment and an emotionally stable working environment. She also focuses on stakeholders' self-esteem, shared ownership, promoting students' talents, caring for the personal and professional lives of the stakeholders, and role modelling acceptable behaviours.

Chameleon as a distinguished leader for learning drew from the African *dare* leadership he experienced in his formative years, an African traditional system of leadership that relies heavily on consensual decision making, and on valuing teamwork over individual effort (Mengisteab, 2006). He listens by giving voice to all school stakeholders, and by harnessing their expertise in promoting the values of democracy, teamwork and interdependence in the school. In implementing *dare* leadership as a school head, Chameleon does what is morally right and acceptable. His decisions benefit the majority, and he puts the stakeholders' interests before his own for the benefit of the school. He does this through a form of shared or distributed LFL, which emphasises consensus decision making and collective ownership of the school. Chameleon practiced his LFL in a way that involved and catered for most of the stakeholders' needs and input, which was key to his enactment. The *dare* approach is where stakeholders' deliberate issues and decisions without fear of being victimised, and as experts who are obliged to contribute.

As was the case with the other school heads, Rainbow had his own commendable LFL practices, which I called Good Shepherd leadership, and which helped him to attain high

academic achievement. According to Resane (2014), shepherd leadership is borrowed from the Book of Psalms, where David alludes to God as his shepherd ("The Lord is my shepherd"). The Good Shepherd leader is a carer, a defender, and a guardian. As a devoted Christian, Rainbow sees the purpose of his teaching and his LFL practices as to prepare the students for the future, with him leading by example like a Good Shepherd. Rainbow aims to bring out the best in students, and he challenges the traditional gender stereotypes attached to students' subject choices, encouraging the provision of equal educational for all students and a fair chance for them to pursue their dreams and passions. Learning for him is more than academic; it includes a vision of a school that guides and prepares students for living as responsible citizens, and that highlights social justice, servant leadership and caring practices, which are key for whole-student learning that goes beyond academic achievement.

Careful consideration of all the above unique LFL practices of the four school heads reveals that certain common LFL practices seem to characterise them as leaders for learning. They are role models — sensible individuals who are morally responsible, who make good decisions in relation to the situation or environment, and who exercise emotional and academic intelligence. They also draw from knowledge they have acquired through experience, and from their cultural and religious context, to become successful leaders for learning. This knowledge can be described using the Greek word *phronesis*, which means "practical wisdom" that has been derived from learning and evidence from practical things (McArthur, Lam-McArthur & Fontaine, 2018). Eikeland (2015) acknowledges that *phronesis* is both ethical and intellectual wisdom. It is ethical as it enables individuals to discern and make good moral judgements by choosing good over evil. This involves deliberating on what is just, fair, friendly, and caring in relation to other people. *Phronesis* constitutes intellectual wisdom in terms of its focus on skills and ability. In conclusion, I assert that the school heads practise *phronesis* LFL practices when leading learning in Zimbabwean schools, which is based on the three "R's": Review, Reflect and Re-evaluate.

7.5 MY THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

The three key research questions I addressed in order to understand the lived experiences of the Zimbabwean school heads as leaders for learning, led to the following conclusions that inform the main findings of my study.

Firstly, I have learnt that school heads have multiple identities produced by their context, emotions, and roles and responsibilities, which are based on their past and present experiences, and also include their future aspirations of self. In other words, who they are is transformative in nature, as it is constantly renegotiated through experiences.

Secondly, the school heads' identity is composed of both personal and professional meanings and understandings of self. Personal meanings and understandings of self are accumulated through their formative experiences in their youth, through social interaction, and through affiliation with various social, cultural and religious groups. Their professional meanings and understandings of self arise from their experiences in multiple positions and roles in school institutions. Their personal and professional meanings and understandings influence each other, and there is an overlap in their personal and professional identities.

Thirdly, the school heads demonstrated unique leadership practices informed by their different personal and professional lived experiences. In addition, their LFL practices were not static, but rather evolved as the school heads' personal and professional lives changed.

The above three conclusions seem to be skewed towards the personal lives of the school heads as key in understanding both their professional lives and their leadership for learning practices. This is so because who people are is defined by their personal lived experiences that translate into actions, beliefs and values. These in turn become apparent in how they conduct their professional lives and how they lead others.

In relation to Hallinger's (2011) LLM, this study on the lived experiences of school heads as leaders for learning has led me to conclude that LFL is also an emotional activity. LFL begins when schools heads experience caring emotions towards the students and their learning, towards school spaces and places, and towards stakeholders. This has led me to identify elements of instructional care that could be considered a key LFL characteristic.

In addition, SIT has also led me to conclude that Hallinger's (2011) LLM for LFL has to be contextualised in order to be effective. My study has shown the importance of African indigenous culture, customs and values in schools, such as *hunhu* and *dare* leadership. My findings could contribute to an African LLM that incorporates most of the features of Hallinger's (2011) model. Finally, the 3 "Rs" (Review, Reflect and Re-evaluate) could be used as filters to make LFL a cyclical process that can be refined and negotiated to make school heads transformative leaders for learning.

7.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study are important to other ELMP academics, to school heads (principals) and to the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Below I outline the implications of the study in three key areas: research implications, policy implications, and implications for practice.

7.6.1 Research implications

According to Hogg et al. (1995), identity is socially constructed and is influenced by family, peers and other individuals encountered in various social contexts. School heads and their LFL practices therefore cannot be separated from their social and historical context. From this finding, I suggest that further educational research be conducted on school heads using narrative inquiry to study their sense of self and their personal histories, in order to understand who they are, as their identity has an impact on their professional lives and practices as leaders for learning. I also suggest that reflective, reflexes practices be incorporated into further research, in accordance with Naicker's (2014) recommendation that heads develop a reflexive understanding of the multiple roles and selves they need to assume to be effective in schools. Reflexive, flexible and transformative LFL practices are important for assuming the complex position of school headship. The school heads in this study engaged in deeply reflexive practices through the 3 R's (Review, Reflect and Re-evaluate) to examine themselves, their school systems and their LFL practices.

7.6.2 Policy implications

I found that LFL for the Zimbabwean school heads is contextual, as education and learning in their school was informed by an African identity that was apparent in their socialisation and their experiences. Their African identity was also apparent in their wish to include African Indigenous Knowledge (AIK) into the school curriculum, which refers to cultural knowledge that they acquired informally and through personal experience while growing up. They wish to incorporate this in the form of farming, environmental management, sports, songs, dance, arts and culture as subjects to be added to the school curriculum. This is in line with scholars such as Shizha (2014), who believe that the current education system in most schools in Africa relies heavily on Western systems of education that promote characteristics of the colonial regime that exclude AIK. In addition, Shiza (2014) notes that the concept of indigenisation or Africanisation of the educational curriculum should be at the forefront of African educational reform initiatives.

Some of the school heads include some of their Zimbabwean cultural practices in leading their schools, inspired by *hunhu* and *dare*, as part of their LFL. *Hunhu* is a Shona word equivalent in translation to *ubuntu* in the southern African context and "humanity" in English. *Hunhu* forms part of an ethical practice, as it provides guidelines on how one needs to conduct oneself acceptably according to Zimbabwean Shona culture. Chinouya and O'Keefe (2006) view *hunhu* as part of an ethics that requires active collectivism, and mutual care and support through acknowledging the needs of others — something which is necessary for the survival of marginalised groups in any community.

From these findings, I suggest that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education include a list of specific elements that constitute *hunhu* in the teacher professional code of conduct for Zimbabwean heads and teachers in schools. I also suggest that *hunhu* be incorporated into formal educational policy as a prerequisite for school leaders, because of the ethics of care enshrined in *hunhu*, which are key to the success of any institution. School heads should capitalise on their *hunhu* to lead by example, share their vision and promote respect, love and care for all stakeholders in their schools by promoting the human rights that are enshrined in the Zimbabwean constitution.

7.6.3 Implications for practice

Dare is an African traditional system of leadership that relies heavily on consensual decision making with the Chief having the final say. Back in the days in the African traditional system of leadership including the "*Dare*" women were not given voice and participation was none in decision making as it was thought to be the responsibility of man. Although, Mulenkei (2010) explains how in most traditional Shona communities, decision making results from participation, allowing input into and influence on the options, services and issues that affect people, producing consensus on decisions, and ownership of the process this however promoted inclusion of mostly men. However times have changed and societies including the Africans have now realised the potential of women and their inclusion in decision making. Applying the idea of "Dare" to education and the inclusion of both men and women in decision making, Bradshaw and Buckner (1994, p. 79) "believe that significant changes demanded of schools can only be attained through shared decision making that encourages people to change and to address educational problems".

I would suggest that schools and school heads as leaders for learning consider adopting the *dare* approach by understanding that the power of two is greater than one, to promote teamwork, engagement and synergies in LFL in schools. This has the potential to bring many benefits through collectivism, shared leadership, and inclusion of all stakeholders by harnessing their expertise in leading learning in the school. This is also supported by the Shona proverb, "*Rume rimwe harikombi churu*", meaning "one man cannot do everything", and is also supported by educational research that finds that school leadership and educating students require a group effort (King, 2002). I recommend democracy at all school levels, and spaces or platforms within schools that support democracy, such as the *dare*, to facilitate processes where people can contribute their ideas, thoughts and feelings without being afraid of being victimised.

7.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH BASED ON THIS STUDY

Firstly, I would suggest that another study be conducted utilising the same methodology, but using different data generation methods for other rich stories that are likely to cover aspects of LFL not identified by the methods I utilised. Secondly, a larger sample could

be considered, in order to cover the other provinces of Zimbabwe (if the necessary resources can be made available), as this would produce more wide-ranging and comprehensive findings to inform policies to promote effective leadership practices. Finally, the inverse of this study needs to be considered, involving research that focuses on the stories of school heads leading low-achieving schools, as well as schools that have experienced a decline in educational quality, as the stories of these school heads could reveal issues of concern that may not be brought to light unless these school heads are given an opportunity to share their stories.

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APPENDIX A: PUBLICATION FROM THE THESIS

SAGIE NAICKER, SIBONELO BLOSE, FREEDOM CHIORORO, RASHIDA KHAN AND INBANATHAN NAICKER

FROM A CRUTCH TO A BUS

Learning About Educational Leadership Research and Practice Through Referencing and Mapping of Objects

The objects which surround us do not simply have utilitarian aspects . . . they serve as a kind of mirror which reflects our own image. (Dichter, as cited in Berger, 2016, p. 14)

PUTTING THE CHAPTER INTO CONTEXT

In reflecting on the scholarship in educational leadership research, it appears that what counts as data in educational leadership research has generally been viewed very narrowly. The discipline has relied heavily on more traditional methods to produce data. For instance, interviews, observations, survey questionnaires, and document analysis have dominated the way scholars generate data in educational leadership research (Deacon, Osman, & Buchler, 2009; Muijs, 2011). Adding voice to the limited methodological tools deployed in the researching of educational leadership, Michael Samuel's evocative call in his keynote address to the 13th international conference of the Educational Management Association of South Africa (EMASA), regarding possible alternative methodological approaches and methods to "expand a potentially moribund discipline of education management and leadership," warrants thoughtful attention (Samuel, 2012). In response, this chapter focuses on an alternative methodological practice in researching educational leadership, namely object inquiry. The chapter weaves an account of educational leadership data production and interpretation invoked by objects (Hurdley, 2006). It relates how working with objects can help us define and redefine who we are as leaders. It recounts how objects can prompt us to reexamine our leadership learning, experiences, and practices (Nordstrom, 2013). More importantly, it signals possibilities for learning about educational leadership research and practice through object inquiry. Thus, the key question that underpins this chapter is: How and what can we learn about educational leadership research and practice through object inquiry?

Freedom's school bus

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

11 March 2016

Mr Freedom Chiororo 212558673
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Chiororo

Protocol reference number: HSS/0226/016D
Project Title: Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools: Narratives of school heads

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 9 March 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanitities & Social Scinces Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr Inba Naicker & Dr Daisy Pillay
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 **Facsimile:** +27 (0) 31 260 4609 **Email:** singhsh@ukzn.ac.za / xxymanv@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE ZIMBABWEAN PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Edgewood Campus
Flat 2 Yellowwood Residences
Room 72
Republic of South Africa
16 November 2015

Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education
Ministry for Primary and Secondary Education
P. O Box CY 121
Causeway
Zimbabwe

Dear Sir

RE: APPLYING FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MANICALAND PROVINCE: IN SIX SCHOOLS IN THREE DISTRICTS NAMELY MUTARE, MAKONI AND NYANGA.

My name is Freedom Chiororo (student number 212558673); a PhD student in the Faculty of Educational Leadership Management and Policy (ELMP) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of fulfilling the requirements of the degree programme, I am expected to conduct a research study. The research title is **Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary school: Narratives of School Heads.**

I am kindly requesting for permission to conduct my research in the above mentioned province. The school in Mutare District is High School, two schools in Makoni District School and High School and three schools in Nyanga District which are School, High School and . The study will involve interviews with the school heads of six chosen secondary schools. Other data generation methods including the collage, artefact and transect walk will be used too. This research should take about two months.

The data generated will be used purely for the research purposes. Confidentiality and anonymity will be observed and adhered to. Data generated will be stored securely. I will ensure that there will be little disturbance of teaching activities as possible. On completion of this study, I promise to hand in a copy of my PhD research thesis to your office by 20 January 2018.

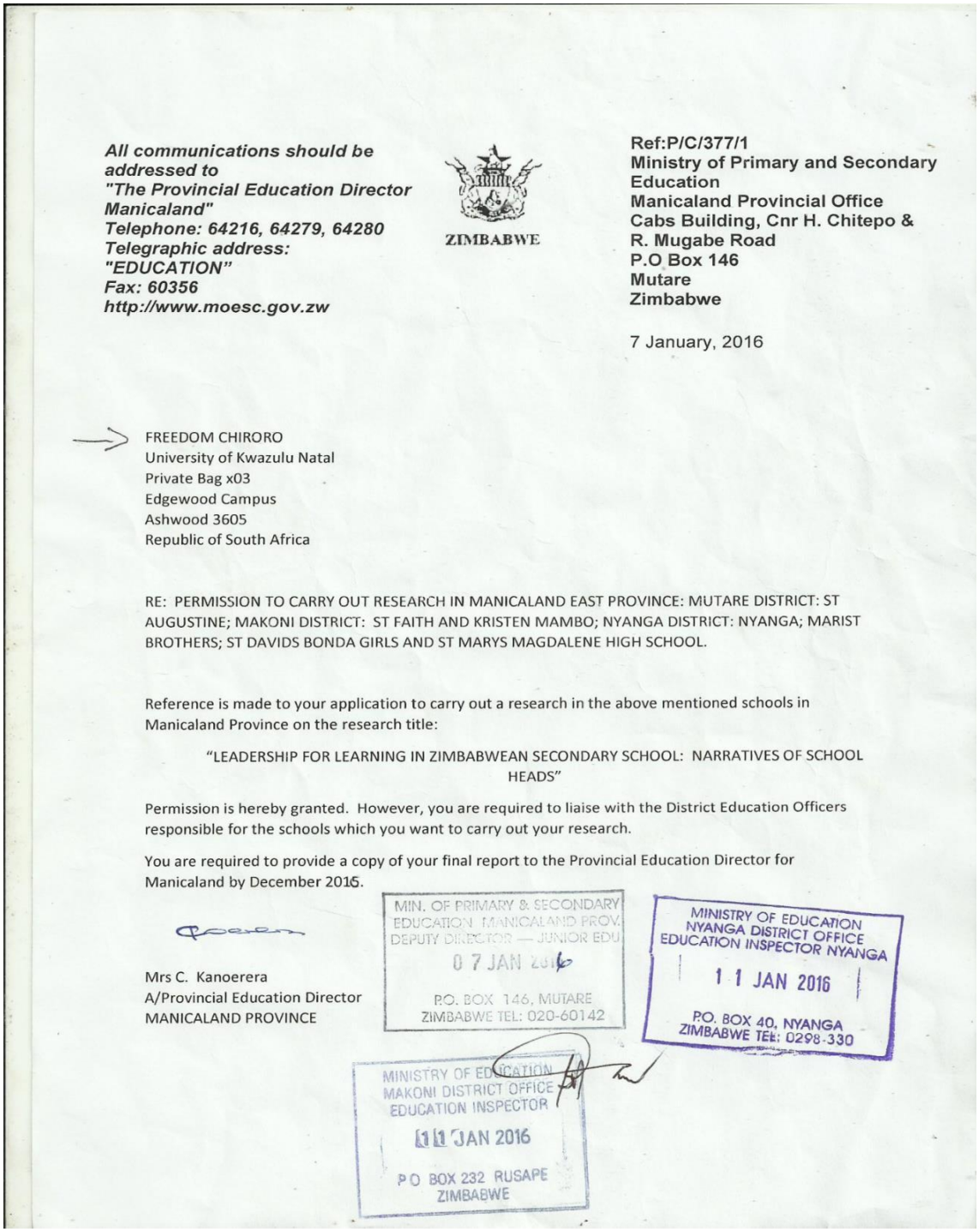
I look forward to your favourable response to my request

Yours faithfully

Freedom Chiororo

PhD student (student no. 212558673)
Cell: 0027 78 6983 855
Email: freedomchiororo@gmail.com

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE ZIMBABWEAN PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



All communications should be addressed to
"The Provincial Education Director Manicaland"
Telephone: 64216, 64279, 64280
Telegraphic address:
"EDUCATION"
Fax: 60356
http://www.moesc.gov.zw

ZIMBABWE

Ref:P/C/377/1
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
Manicaland Provincial Office
Cabs Building, Cnr H. Chitepo &
R. Mugabe Road
P.O Box 146
Mutare
Zimbabwe

7 January, 2016

FREEDOM CHIRORO
University of Kwazulu Natal
Private Bag x03
Edgewood Campus
Ashwood 3605
Republic of South Africa

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MANICALAND EAST PROVINCE: MUTARE DISTRICT: ST AUGUSTINE; MAKONI DISTRICT: ST FAITH AND KRISTEN MAMBO; NYANGA DISTRICT: NYANGA; MARIST BROTHERS; ST DAVIDS BONDA GIRLS AND ST MARYS MAGDALENE HIGH SCHOOL.

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research in the above mentioned schools in Manicaland Province on the research title:

"LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING IN ZIMBABWEAN SECONDARY SCHOOL: NARRATIVES OF SCHOOL HEADS"

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the District Education Officers responsible for the schools which you want to carry out your research.

You are required to provide a copy of your final report to the Provincial Education Director for Manicaland by December 2016.

Mrs C. Kanoerera
A/Provincial Education Director
MANICALAND PROVINCE

MIN. OF PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION MANICALAND PROV.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR — JUNIOR EDU.
07 JAN 2016
P.O. BOX 146, MUTARE
ZIMBABWE TEL: 020-60142

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
NYANGA DISTRICT OFFICE
EDUCATION INSPECTOR NYANGA
11 JAN 2016
P.O. BOX 40, NYANGA
ZIMBABWE TEL: 0298-330

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
MAKONI DISTRICT OFFICE
EDUCATION INSPECTOR
11 JAN 2016
P O BOX 232 RUSAPE
ZIMBABWE

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT- PARTICIPANTS

Dear Participant

Request for consent to participate in a research study

I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and this research forms part of my PhD study. As part of my PhD research I will be interviewing six secondary school heads. This sample will represent school heads of top academic achieving schools in Manicaland province from three districts namely Nyanga, Makoni and Mutasa.

The title of my research is: Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools: Narratives of school heads.

The aim of this study is to

1. To understand who are the school heads leading learning in Zimbabwean schools
2. To explore the meanings and understandings the school heads draw on as leaders for learning
3. To understand how do the meanings shape their day-to-day practice of leadership for learning in school

The findings of this study will be used in my PhD dissertation and any related publications and presentations.

In this study I will use the following methods to generate data from my participants: individual unstructured, artefact inquiry, collage inquiry and transect walk. All discussion will be audio taped recorded.

Each participant will be engaged in:

- One individual unstructured
- One collage inquiry session
- One artefact inquiry session
- One transect walk

Each session will be approximately an hour long.

I hereby request permission from you to use your oral narrative descriptions, collages, artefact, and the transect walk as data for my research. I will only use this data if I receive written consent from you.

I will use this data in a way that respects your dignity and privacy. Copies of your contributions will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes. Your name or any information that might identify you will not be used in any presentation or publication that might come out of the study. There are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. However, I hope that this study will make a significant contribution to research on school heads' personal and professional lived experiences in the Zimbabwean secondary schools.

I also wish to inform you that you have no binding commitment to the study and may withdraw your consent at any time if you feel the need to. If you withdraw your consent, you will not be prejudiced in any way. If you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact Ms Phume Ximba in the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Office on 031-260 3587.

This study is supervised by Professor Inba Naicker and Professor Daisy Pillay who are senior lecturers at the School of Educational Leadership Management and Policy and School of Education and Development, UKZN respectively Professor Inba can be contacted telephonically at 031- 2603461 and Professor Pillay at 031- 2607598

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Mr F Chiororo

Cell: 00 27786983855

APPENDIX F: DECLARATION TO CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

TITLE OF STUDY: Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools: Narratives of school heads.

I _____

(full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this study, and do consent to participate in the study .

I understand that I am free to leave/withdraw from the study at any time if I want to without any negative or undesirable consequences to myself.

I am consenting to the following data generation activities (please tick)

	YES	**NO**
In-depth unstructured interviews		
Collages inquiry		
Artifact inquiry		
Transect walk		

I also grant/ do not grant permission for the conversations to be audio tape recorded.

_____ _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE:

_____ _____

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS DATE

ADDRESS: _____

Tel: _____

Email:_____

APPENDIX G: LIFE STORY RELEASE FORM

Life Story Release Form

I, _____, have read the life story recorded and written with Freedom Chiororo. As well as I have read, understand, and agree to the following points.

1) I have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the life story as I see appropriate.

2) I acknowledge that the life story accurately reflects the content of my person interview with Freedom Chiororo.

3) I authorize the release of the life story to Freedom Chiororo to publish my story.

4) I have received a copy of the life story for my own records.

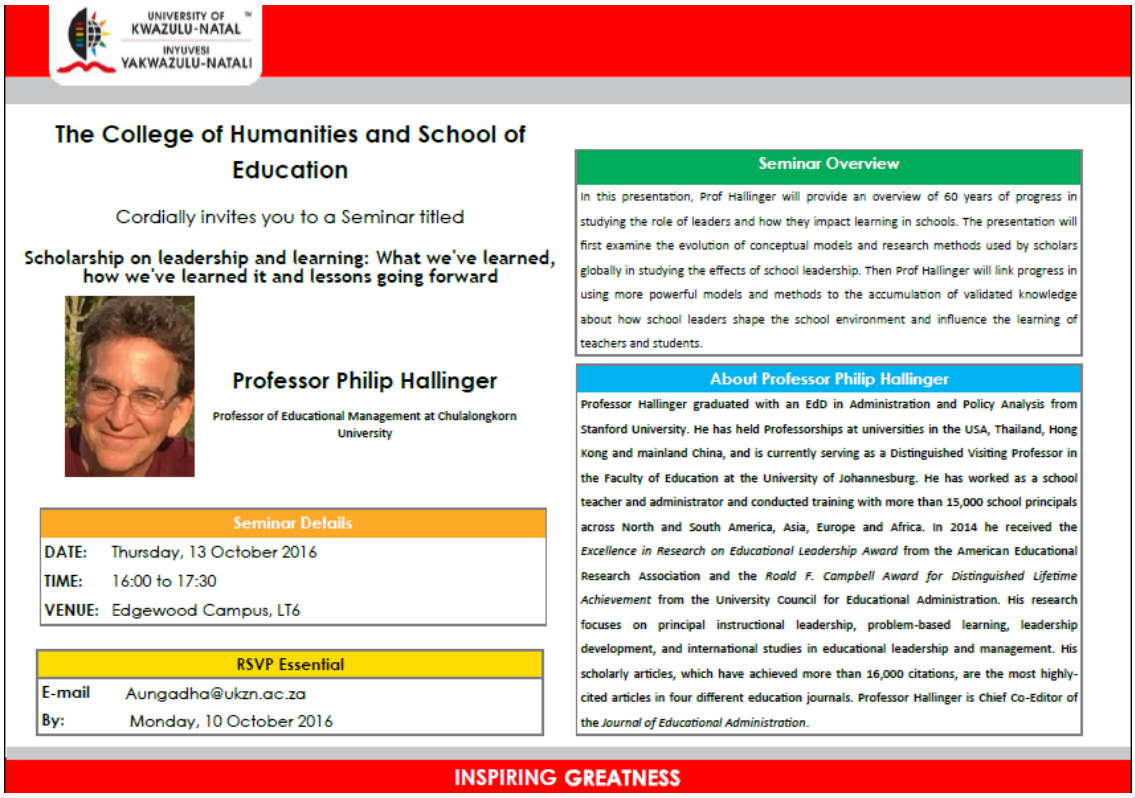
_____ _____

DATE PARTICIPANT

_____ _____

DATE RESEARCHER

APPENDIX H: HALLINGER'S VISIT



UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

The College of Humanities and School of Education

Cordially invites you to a Seminar titled

Scholarship on leadership and learning: What we've learned, how we've learned it and lessons going forward

Professor Philip Hallinger

Professor of Educational Management at Chulalongkorn University

Seminar Details

DATE: Thursday, 13 October 2016
TIME: 16:00 to 17:30
VENUE: Edgewood Campus, LT6

RSVP Essential

E-mail: Aungadha@ukzn.ac.za
By: Monday, 10 October 2016

Seminar Overview

In this presentation, Prof Hallinger will provide an overview of 60 years of progress in studying the role of leaders and how they impact learning in schools. The presentation will first examine the evolution of conceptual models and research methods used by scholars globally in studying the effects of school leadership. Then Prof Hallinger will link progress in using more powerful models and methods to the accumulation of validated knowledge about how school leaders shape the school environment and influence the learning of teachers and students.

About Professor Philip Hallinger

Professor Hallinger graduated with an EdD in Administration and Policy Analysis from Stanford University. He has held Professorships at universities in the USA, Thailand, Hong Kong and mainland China, and is currently serving as a Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg. He has worked as a school teacher and administrator and conducted training with more than 15,000 school principals across North and South America, Asia, Europe and Africa. In 2014 he received the *Excellence in Research on Educational Leadership Award* from the American Educational Research Association and the *Roald F. Campbell Award for Distinguished Lifetime Achievement* from the University Council for Educational Administration. His research focuses on principal instructional leadership, problem-based learning, leadership development, and international studies in educational leadership and management. His scholarly articles, which have achieved more than 16,000 citations, are the most highly-cited articles in four different education journals. Professor Hallinger is Chief Co-Editor of the *Journal of Educational Administration*.

INSPIRING GREATNESS

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND POLICY

Programme for Professor P. Hallinger Visit (13 and 14 October 2016)

Thursday, 13 October 2016

09:50 Arrive at King Shaka Airport (Durban, South African Airways 539) (Depart JHB 8:45)

11:30 – 12:45 Meeting with academic staff from the Education Leadership, Management and Policy discipline. Input from Prof. Hallinger on some of his recently completed work and current work. Staff will make input on some of their current research and publications with a view to gaining some input by Prof. Hallinger. Discussion on possibilities for partnership. **Venue: Ex SED Boardroom**

12:45 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30 – 15:15 Meeting with PhD students (25min per student) (Mr Bongani Mkhize, **Mr Freedom Chiororo**, Pinkie Mthembu and Sibonelo Blose) These students are researching in the

area of instructional leadership/leadership for learning and would like to chat about some aspects of their study. **Venue: Ex SED Boardroom**

15:15 – 15:45 Tea

16:00 – 17:30 School of Education Seminar (attended by Staff and Postgraduate Students). Presentation titled: ***Scholarship on leadership and learning: What we've learned, how we've learned it and lessons going forward*** (60 minutes presentation and 30 minutes questions and comments from staff and students) **Venue: LT6**

17:45 Depart for Hotel: Southern Sun Elangeni

Friday, 14 October 2016
09:15 Arrive from Hotel: Southern Sun Elangeni

09:30 – 10:15 Workshop with Staff and Postgraduate students (30 staff and students) – Title: ***How advances in Googlescholar are reshaping the process of conducting systematic reviews of research***
Venue: Seminar Room 1 – Conference Centre

10:15 -10:30 Tea

10:30 – 11:15 Continuation of Workshop – ***How advances in Googlescholar are reshaping the process of conducting systematic reviews of research***
Venue: Seminar Room 1 – Conference Centre

11:15 – 12:00 Lunch

12:00 – 13:30 UTLO University-wide Seminar – Title: ***Riding the tiger of world university rankings: Where are we heading?*** (60 minutes presentation and 30 minutes questions and comments)
Venue: TBC by Slie

13:45 Departure from Edgewood Campus

15:35 Departure - King Shaka Airport (Durban, South African Airways 566) (arrive JHB 16:40)

APPENDIX I: MY PERSONAL COLLAGE WRITE UP OF MY SCHOOLING EXPERIENCE

A collage is defined by Harrison (2003) as a form of art whereby images and objects are combined into one piece of artwork. The above is a collage to represent my schooling experience in pictures. The first section of the collage shows the main idea of the school as my new home. The picture that shows Educate Zimbabwe highlights the importance of education in Zimbabwe and to my parents. This picture's importance is the one that made my parents to find me a new home (the school with qualified professionals) to educate me. This is depicted by the picture where parents are holding hands of their child walking into the school. The school became my new home in the sense that it is where I left my parents' house to go and stay and to receive education at a stipulated amount of school fees. The school met the qualities of a home in the sense that it is where I stayed, schooled, grew up and also got moral and career guidance with the assistance of school staff and my school mates. In the next coming 6 years I enrolled at the school, I had to spent 9 months or more of the year there and 3 or less months at home. My parents send me there to get educated because they had trust in the school that it will educate me, take care of me and lead me to achieve my desired dream or vision of becoming a professional in the economy.

The school staff and management became my parents and the other students became my family members. The school had people (school staff, teachers and learners) from various backgrounds brought together by teaching and learning. The book signifies what hold the school together or the core of the school which is teaching and learning. The school is a Catholic school which is depicted by the picture of learners in the chapel. Every Sunday all the learners regardless of their differing religion were summoned to a 1 to 2hr Catholic Church mass. This was important for us to have high moral values and to uphold a sense of togetherness, oneness and to behave like a family. We also had prayers before we ate food, on assemblies and before sleeping every day. The school management team also included the Roman Catholic Brothers.

The following section of the collage relates to the actual teaching and learning experience I went through as an individual. The picture showing the learners putting their hands up showed how enthusiastic we were as learners. Also to highlight how the students were prepared to answer questions since it was very competitive at the school because it only recruited the best learners across the country.

APPENDIX J: MY ARTEFACT WRITE UP (FORMER HIGH SCHOOL BUS)

I chose my former high school bus to symbolise my research interest on the narrative of Zimbabwean school heads as leaders for learning. As an individual this narrative inquiry on the Zimbabwean school heads on leadership for learning is important to me since it brings back memories in terms of how I attained my education at a school that I believe had a successful leader of learning. My school was and is still currently an educational powerhouse in Zimbabwe through the school head who is a strong leader for learning. Even though the school head has changed but the school has retained its high academic achievement because the school heads have one thing in common which is leading learning in the school. I would want to hear the stories of the current school heads in terms of how they lead learning in their own schools. I would want to find out if there are certain practices that are recurrent and those that differ, how they differ considering also the different contexts of time, economic and political. As part of my personal justification for my PhD I have inserted the school bus of my former school. The bus is a metaphor representing the school. The bus has a limited capacity which is the same as the school it only takes a few best students who meet the academic entry requirements. As a passenger in the bus I managed to reach my destination and this was made possible by the bus driver, drivers assistances (teachers and staff), relationships I made other with other passengers along the way (other students) and finally my parents who paid for my journey through school fees and other educational needs. The driver who is the school head remains the most important and influential person for me to reach my destination. The driver's planning, coordination with his team and time management were some of the factors that led to a successful journey. The same importance and influence the bus driver has in any person's journey is the same way the school head is important and influential for any school to attain and reach their laid objectives and to take the students' to their educational destination. The bus driver is the school head who leads/drive the school to academic success through his/her leadership for learning practices. He does this through negotiating his identities as a driver, parent and stakeholder of the school during practicing his/her leadership in enacting his/her duties and roles with the interested stakeholders who are the parents (the funders of the students and also as they check on how far both the student

and the school have gone in terms of educational progress), assistants who are the teachers and staff and the students as the passengers. In the bus there are relationships that…

APPENDIX K: MY TRANSECT WALK WRITE UP

FIRST SITE: CHECHECHE HOME TOWN

The above picture reminds me of who I am and where I came from. The above picture shows to the left my father during his early adulthood when he used to work as a mechanic in one company in Bulawayo. To the right are both of my parents through their journey of life after they got married and my father now owned his company Nyamuzara Motors. The picture was taken in our car sale and in the background is one of the cars being sold. My parents especially my father have been the source of inspiration in my life. As I grew up my father was my role model. He was a respected member of our society and likewise he had respect of any person he met regardless of age, gender, race, political, social and financial background. That is one of my strength I can relate to anyone without bias or prejudice and it is that respect for others that made me to blend in to any learning environment that I encountered up to date. The society and the world at large is composed of unique people of different origin and background and it is through respect of each other that people can live and tolerate each other.

An interesting aspect of my father is what he had that people called a “sweet tounge”. This so called “sweet tounge” is the power to convenience another person without using any force or cohesion to buy into your thoughts or ideas. This was an important aspect I

also took from him. To be a leader you need to sweet talk your subordinate, rivals and stakeholders to let them hear **[…]**

APPENDIX L: TURN IT IN REPORT

APPENDIX M: LANGUAGE EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

8 November, 2019

To whom it may concern,

I have edited the following thesis for language errors, and in the process have checked the referencing and layout:

Title: *Leadership for learning in Zimbabwean secondary schools: Narratives of school heads.*

Author: Freedom Chiororo

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy (Educational Leadership, Management and Policy)

Institution: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Student number: 212558673

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Please feel free to contact me should you have any queries.

Kind regards,

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